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THE SUFFERING MAN-GOD

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THE SUFFERING MAN-GOD

(L'HOMME-DIEU SOUFFRANT)

OR

The Divinity of Jesus Christ Resplendent in His Sufferings

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BY

PÈRE SERAPHIN

PASSIONIST

Rev. Seraphin Giammaria, C.P., 1804-79

TRANSLATED BY

LILIAN M. WARD

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE Divinity of Jesus Christ is not a question to be discussed; it is a fundamental principle, solidly established, outside of which no other foundation can be laid. '*The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us, . . . full of grace and truth*' (St. John i. 14).

These simple and sublime words of the Apostle St. John establish at once the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and they contain at the same time the announcement of the supernatural position to which man was raised by Him.

In placing the Divinity of Jesus Christ as the basis of religious belief, these words would have us understand that the Word made Flesh—the Son of God become Man—Jesus Christ, is the only Door, as it were, by which God has come *personally* to us, and the only means by which we can penetrate into the infinite treasures of His Divine Being.

When we speak of the Divinity of Our Saviour in this work, we do not regard it as a question

which requires to be either elucidated or proved ; we speak of it as an already established principle, from which we must start in order to draw the salutary conclusions which emanate from it, and which will lead us to procure for ourselves that eternal happiness to which we all aspire.

Glancing at the Gospels, we see everywhere reflected the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Taking them page by page, it would be easy for us to write a large volume on this subject, so worthy of the study of every true Christian. In this little work we have confined ourselves to the one drama of the Passion of Our Saviour. We have endeavoured to show how the Divinity of Jesus shines forth resplendent in the midst of the insults and abasements of His sorrowful Passion, and how the humiliation and sufferings which He endured, far from detracting from His Divinity, do but serve to show it forth with a more brilliant splendour.

There exists, however, a class of impious, so-called wise, men who, especially in these days, strive to explain away the Divinity of Our Divine Lord by the science of the nineteenth century. They drag it in the mire of their irreligious journals, disfiguring it by the insolence of their impious denial, and insulting it with the venom of their blasphemous sarcasms. Indignant at these audacious sacrileges and unheard-of out-

rages, which call down vengeance from above, we have taken up our pen. We would show how the Divinity of Jesus Christ shone forth gloriously even amid the indignities of His dolorous Passion, when Our Saviour was most degraded, and consequently that the pseudo-philosophers who have dared to insult this brilliant aureole of Christ deserve naught but disdain, wanting, as they show themselves to be, in that quality of good feeling which is the portion of every rational and honest man.

Ah! do you dare to deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ? As for me, I affirm it loudly, for Jesus Christ is for us on this earth something more than God of Heaven. 'Jesus,' said but lately a great prelate of France—'Jesus is God come into His own work. He is God with us, He is God abiding with us, He is God of the human race, He is God of the nations, He is God of the home, the God of our First Communion, the God of our hearts. All that touches Our Lord Jesus touches man in his most sensitive feelings.'

Let me, then, speak of this Lord Jesus; let me show you His Divinity rising radiant and beautiful from the ignominies of that Passion which serves but as a veil to reveal it to us more clearly.

These words are addressed, for the most part, to the community of the faithful. We would reanimate their faith in Jesus Christ and nourish

their piety in order that they may more lovingly make reparation to their outraged Saviour. Thus will they appease the anger of God, justly irritated against those who, in the transports of their passions, dare to call in question the Divinity of Our Divine Saviour, and to deny it openly.

In this work we say no new thing; we have only followed the doctrine of the Church and the teachings of the Fathers, profiting at the same time by the lights furnished us by learned ecclesiastical writers.

F. SERAPHIN.

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

HAVING suggested the translation into English of Father Seraphin's work, 'The Suffering Man-God,' it is fitting that I should comply with the translator's request, and introduce it to the English reading public by giving a short notice of its author.

Father Seraphin of the Heart of Jesus, known in the world as John Giammaria, lived through the greater part of the last century. He was born at Anagni, a small town in the Papal States, on January 15, 1804. He entered the Congregation of the Passionists at the age of seventeen, and made his religious profession on October 7, 1822. Having finished his studies he was ordained priest, and was appointed Vice-Master of Novices, then Lector of Students, and afterwards Master of Novices in one of our Italian provinces. When the time came for making a foundation of the Congregation in Belgium he was one of the priests selected to accompany

Father Dominic of the Mother of God, and to help him in making that new foundation, and when Father Dominic left for England, Father Seraphin remained to continue the work of the Order in Belgium. In that province he filled successively the offices of Master of Novices, Lector, Rector, and Provincial Consultor.

He was well read and learned in all the branches of theological science, and was looked upon especially as a great master of the spiritual life. He became as well known and as much venerated throughout Belgium for his rare virtue and missionary zeal as Father Dominic in England. This is evident from the fact that many Belgian Bishops and other ecclesiastics of distinction had frequent recourse to him for guidance and advice in delicate and important affairs for the good of souls. He was employed continually as director to many religious communities, and in his capacity as director of souls the Bishop of Tournai and the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines confided to him two favoured and celebrated persons that he might test their virtue and the genuineness of their visions and revelations. One of these was the ecstatic Louise Lateau, so well known for the wonders which God effected in and by her up to the time of her death.

Father Seraphin is also well known for his writings. He translated many important works

into French, and he was the author of many others, amongst which I may mention two others on the Passion of our Lord—one entitled 'Reflexions pieuses sur la Passion de J. C.,' in three volumes, a most useful work of meditations for religious and devout souls; the other written in Latin, and entitled 'Promptuarium Ecclesiasticum Super Passione Christi Domini,' intended chiefly for priests and ecclesiastics, which work was honoured by a Brief of approval by His Holiness Pius IX. He was also the author of a remarkable work on mystical theology, entitled 'Principes de Theologie Mystique,' to which is attached as frontispiece a theological table or plan showing in outline the several grades of contemplation and the ascetical way to heaven, which merited the approval and commendation of the holy and learned Bishop Ullathorne of Birmingham.

After having spent thirty-five years in Belgium, Father Seraphin was called to Rome in 1876, and appointed Secretary-General of his Congregation, which high office he held until his death, which occurred on July 26, 1879. At a ripe old age, after many years of faithful labours as a Passionist, full of virtue and of merits, and assisted by the prayers of his brethren, he closed his career by a peaceful and happy death.

The present work, which was published in 1875, appears to have been his last. It is evident that it is the result of profound piety, and of fervent and mature meditation on all the phases of the Passion of Our Divine Saviour. He has viewed the Passion in a new, original, and learned manner, and has discovered in its smallest details the striking and touching traces of the Divinity which they manifest. It is a revelation and a train of ideas which had not been before his time presented in the same manner in any published work on the Passion, and which had not been perhaps so carefully noticed or so well explored. It may be stated that this solid work of study and meditation, so entirely in conformity with Catholic doctrine, is most opportune. It demonstrates to the faithful that the various sufferings of the Man-God reveal to the thoughtful mind a series of miracles as striking and as great as those which marked His footsteps during His public life when He went about doing good to all. At the present time, when there are many errors propagated against our Lord's Divinity, which Father Morris of the Oratory has grouped under the title 'New Unbelief,' it will be useful for all sincere Christians to have at hand a reasonable, clear, and devout demonstration such as we have here in this small volume to enable them to reaffirm and renew their faith in Jesus

Christ, which so many discordant voices endeavour to disprove.

The translation is a free rather than a literal one, but at the same time the author of this English version has succeeded well in giving us clearly the sense of the original work in all its historical, spiritual, and theological bearings and character, and I think it does not detract anything from her work that she has thought it well to omit some of the exuberant exclamations and phrases that are suitable and very probably appreciated in the French original. I may conclude this short notice by the two texts which Father Seraphin gives on the first page of his book in reference to Christ's Divinity: *Qui vidit Me, videt et Patrem*—'He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also' (St. John xiv. 9). *Hoc demutare, Antichristi est; hoc negare Judæi est; hoc nescire, gentilis est*—'To change or alter this is (an act) of Antichrist; to deny it is that of a Jew; and to be ignorant of it is pagan' (St. Hilary, 'Tract. de Trinitate,' lib. vii. 32).

ARTHUR DEVINE,
PASSIONIST.

ST. JOSEPH'S RETREAT,
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Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, 1905.

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THE SUFFERING MAN-GOD

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST SHOWN BY HIMSELF

In their arrogance and pride, impious men have ever thought to hurl the greatest insult at the worshippers of Jesus Christ by reproaching them with the homage they pay to a *Crucified Man*.

These unbelievers have thought that it needed but to recall the memory of the infamies of His Passion to condemn Christ and the Christian religion that He founded. But their scoffs and blasphemies cannot destroy the work of God, still less can they injure His own Person, in what form soever He wills to show Himself to us.

It is impiety that makes the 'sensual man' of whom St. Paul speaks (1 Cor. ii. 14), and man, become sensual by impiety, can no longer see how Divine was the Passion of Jesus Christ, nor can he realize what strength the miracles of Our Divine Saviour had for proving His Divinity

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and at the same time the Divinity of the Christian religion.

Before gazing upon the splendour shed by the Divinity of Our Saviour in His Passion, Humiliations, Crucifixion, and Death, let us pause for a few moments and establish His Divinity by the most direct and incontestable proofs.

We will choose three, and in order to make it more clear we will place them in three distinct paragraphs : (1) We will follow St. Matthew's narrative in the ninth chapter of his Gospel ; (2) we will examine, as a proof of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of Lazarus, described in the eleventh chapter of the Gospel of St. John ; (3) as the crowning proof of the Divinity of Our Saviour, we will consider His own Resurrection, as narrated to us by the Evangelists.

I.

We may remark, at the outset, that Jesus Christ worked many miracles of all kinds, but what must be particularly noted about them is that He did not perform any of them by any power outside Himself, but by His very own power, exercised when and as He willed.

The Saints, in working miracles, have always done so in the name of God, never in their own name. Moses, that great Thaumaturgus, always performed his miracles thus, and, moreover, he

only worked these prodigies when using his mysterious rod ; without it, he was only a weak and powerless man.

Jesus Christ worked some of His miracles without even speaking. The touch of His garment alone healed the most incurable diseases. He did all in His own Name. To all who wished to hear He said He was equal to God, whom He called His Father. He repeated that what His Father did on earth He did also, that the works of His Father were His works. Not only did He work His miracles without the least dependence on anyone, but He communicated His power to others. He raised the dead as easily as He performed the most ordinary actions, He commanded whenever the occasion required, and all knew that He was the God of the dead as well as of the living.

The ancient prophets, who were only the ambassadors of God, always began their teaching in these words : 'Thus saith the Lord' (*Hæc dicit Dominus*). Jesus Christ speaks in His own Name. He speaks as Lord and Master of all things. He decides *tanquam potestatem habens* ('as having power'). On all occasions He says : '*I* say unto thee,' '*I* command thee.' He uses this language with men, with all other creatures, even with the demons, who obey the first word that falls from His lips.

He sees the future as clearly as He sees the past ; He foretells things to come with the same

assurance as He speaks of the present; He tells what will happen at the end of the world as surely as if it had already come to pass. These are all irrefragable proofs of the wisdom and Divine power within Him — wisdom and power which He uses at His will, and which are identified with His Person. At times He trembles, He shudders, He is troubled; but it is only at the awful sight of sin and the hard-heartedness of His people, for the one thing that can make the Man-God shudder is the sight of a soul stained with crimes and obstinate in sin.

We can, therefore, plainly see that the supreme power which shines forth in Jesus Christ, in all He says and in all He does, is not a borrowed power, or one foreign to Himself; it is a permanent power, which is natural to Him, which He possesses in Himself, and which is identical with the power of God, His Father. He uses it with more facility than we use our feet to walk or our hands to work.

Of this we have a striking proof, among many others, in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew.

One day, when Jesus went to Capharnaum, they brought to Him a poor paralytic, groaning upon his bed of suffering, and deprived of the use of his limbs. On seeing the faith of those who had brought the sick man, Our Saviour turned to him, and said: 'Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee.' We see, at a glance,

that this is a Divine act, that Jesus is acting as One who has power. He probed the hearts of all around. In the hearts of those who had brought the paralytic man to Him He saw lively faith that deserved a reward, in the heart of the sick man He saw the sins that he had committed. He remitted these sins by *His own authority*, a privilege belonging to God alone, according to the avowal of the Scribes themselves. But He did still more. After saying to the sick man, 'Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee,' He penetrated the hearts of the Scribes who heard these words, and who, without giving expression to their thoughts, were murmuring within themselves, and calling Jesus a blasphemer.

He surprised them all in their bad thoughts, and said to them: 'Why do you think evil in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sin (then said He to the man sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house.' The action followed the word. The man who had been sick of the palsy rose, took up his bed, and went away. At this solemn moment all are astonished, and they say within themselves: 'We have never seen the like.'

This miracle proves the absolute power that Jesus possessed of forgiving sins. This absolute power belongs only to God. The Scribes them-

selves declared this, therefore Jesus Christ Himself is God, and it is in virtue of His Divinity that He acts in this manner.

This miracle is followed by others. From Capharnaum Jesus went to the shore of the lake, and He saw a man called Matthew sitting in the custom-house. Our Saviour addressed him in a tone of authority, and said to him : ' Follow Me.' These two simple words were sufficient to change the heart of this man, who immediately left his custom-house and became the disciple of Our Lord. God alone can work these wonders, for He alone has the key of our hearts. By these two words the Man-God gave the publican that interior attraction which sweetly yet firmly led him to give up all, and follow at once, without hesitation, the Master who called him.

A little later, a ruler of the synagogue came to Jesus, and, adoring Him, said, with tears in his eyes : ' Lord, my daughter is even now dead, but come, lay Thy Hand on her, and she shall live.' Jesus rose and followed him. On the way He met a woman who had been ill for twelve years. She approached behind Him, and touched the hem of His garment, having within her a lively faith. Jesus perceived her, and casting on her a glance all Divine, He said to her : ' Be of good heart, daughter, thy faith has made thee whole.' And the woman was cured at the same hour.

Having arrived at the house of the ruler, Our Saviour entered the chamber wherein lay the

body of the dead girl, and He said, 'The girl is not dead, but sleepeth,' showing by these words that it is easier for Him to raise one from the dead than it is for us to awaken one from sleep. When the crowd had departed, He remained alone with His three disciples and the father and mother, who were mourning for their child. Taking the dead girl by the hand, He said to her: 'Damsel, I say to thee, arise.' Immediately the young girl arose and walked (St. Mark v. 23-42). When Jesus came out of the house of the ruler, He was followed by two blind men, who cried out, 'Son of David, have mercy on us.' No sooner did He touch their eyes than they were cured. The disciples then brought Him a dumb man, possessed by the devil. He cast out the devil, the dumb man spoke, and all the multitude were in admiration of Him.

We see, then, how Jesus Christ exercises His Omnipotence, and bestows His favours as He wills. At every step He takes, at every word He utters, He uses His power and performs a miracle. He speaks as Lord of all; He acts as Master of all; He commands, and instantly He is obeyed by the most incurable diseases, by death, by demons themselves. He sees what is passing in the mind and heart of each one. He sees the affection of some, the spite and animosity of others, the thoughts of all. He sees their sins, and forgives them by a power He alone possesses; and in order to convince all men that He really

has this Divine power, He performs a miracle, which fills all beholders with wonder, and which not even His most eager enemies dare dispute.

The conclusion we must draw from this is that Jesus Christ is God, as He Himself declared.

II.

If we examine the resurrection of Lazarus we can see still more clearly the Divinity of Jesus Christ.

At Bethania, near Jerusalem, there lived a family composed of two sisters and a brother. The two sisters were called Martha and Mary, and the brother's name was Lazarus. We do not know the origin of the warm affection Our Divine Saviour had for this family ; it is, however, certain that He honoured them with a marked esteem and friendship.

Whilst Jesus and His disciples were at Bethabara, near the Jordan, Lazarus fell sick at Bethania. The two sisters, Mary and Martha, seeing their brother in danger, sent word to Jesus, telling Him that he whom He loved was sick (*Ecce, quam amas, infirmatur*). Jesus, who already knew of the sickness of Lazarus, could have gone to him at once and cured him, or He could have restored him to health even from the distance He was from him ; but instead of that He remained several days longer at Bethabara, and only answered the messengers that the sick-

ness of Lazarus was 'not unto death' (*Infirmitas hæc non est ad mortem*). Those who heard Him did not fully understand the expression used by Our Divine Saviour, by which He said that the sickness of His friend would not end at death, but would go still further, even to the miracle of resurrection, as St. Augustine has so well remarked: *Ipsa mors non erat ad mortem, sed potius ad miraculum* (Tract 49, 'In Joan.,' n. 6).

But, we may ask, what was Our Saviour's reason for working this miracle of resurrection? In the first place, by it He would show us that He has supreme power over the dead as over the living, and He would also show us that the miracle He is about to work will have for its end the glory of the Son inseparable from the glory of the Father; for He adds that this sickness is for the glory of God, and that thereby the Son of God may be glorified (*Infirmitas hæc non est ad mortem, sed pro gloria Dei, ut glorificetur Filius Dei per eam*).

Jesus was in Galilee when He uttered these words, then, turning to His disciples, He said: 'Let us go into Judea again; Lazarus, our friend, sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.' His disciples said to Him: 'Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.' They took His words literally to mean ordinary sleep, whilst Jesus was speaking of the death of His friend. 'Lazarus was *dead* to his sisters,' said St. Augustine, 'but

he *slept* in the sight of God' (*Sororibus mortuus erat, Domino dormiabat, loc. cit.*, n. 9). Jesus then speaks more plainly, and He says to them : 'Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe ; but let us go to him.' Our Saviour says clearly, 'Lazarus is dead,' but He adds : 'Let us go to him.' 'He would have us see by this,' says St. Cyril, 'that a God is speaking, because the dead are as the living in the sight of Him who has both the will and the power to restore them to life' ('In Joan.'). Jesus, accompanied by His disciples, then directs His steps to Bethania, but it is four days after the death of Lazarus. On hearing that Jesus has arrived, Martha comes to Him and says to Him, with a faith as yet but dim : 'Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died ; but now also I know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.' Desiring to enlighten the faith of Martha before performing the miracle of raising Lazarus, Jesus said to her in a firm voice : 'Thy brother shall rise again.' Martha ought to have understood that this forcible expression was not the speech of a servant who needed to pray before Lazarus could return to life, but that it was the word of a Master who had power to command life and death, and be obeyed. She, however, took this expression of Our Saviour's, 'Thy brother shall rise again,' as the ordinary consolation given to friends on such occasions ;

therefore she answered : 'I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' This answer of Martha's obliged Our Divine Saviour to declare more explicitly who He was. In order to increase her faith and raise her to the knowledge of His Divinity, He said, then, to her : 'I am the Resurrection and the Life' (*Ego sum Resurrectio et Vita*)—'I Myself am the Principle of Resurrection and of Life.' If He had need of any power outside Himself to raise Lazarus or any other from the dead, how could He say that He was the Resurrection and the Life ? This reflection is made by St. Chrysostom : *Si alio adjutorio indigeret, quomodo ipse resurrectio esset ?*

Martha, enlightened by so sublime a doctrine, believed in the Saviour who taught it to her, and who demanded of her a public act of faith by saying to her : 'Believest thou this ?' (*Credis hoc ?*) 'Yes, Lord,' she answered without hesitation ; 'I have believed that Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God, who art come into this world.' After this expression of lively faith Martha goes and calls Mary, who has remained at home. Mary, in her turn, comes to Jesus. The Jews, who had been endeavouring to console her, follow her ; for, without any desire on their part, they are to be witnesses of the great miracle Our Divine Saviour is about to perform.

When Jesus saw Mary weeping for her brother He was troubled, and groaned in His Spirit, and

said: 'Where have you laid him?' They answered Him: 'Come, Lord, and see.' 'And Jesus wept' (*Et lacrymatus est Jesus*). He is about to show that He is God by performing a Divine miracle, but first He will show that He is Man by weeping at the sorrow of His friend. He weeps also at the hard-heartedness of the Jews, who, in spite of the miracle they had seen Him perform in curing the man born blind, doubt His power of restoring Lazarus to life.

Jesus, groaning again within Himself, comes to the sepulchre. Now, it was a cave cut out of the rock, and a stone was placed at the entrance. 'Martha saith to Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days. Jesus saith to her, Did I not say to thee that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?' That is to say, 'You will see My power, which is the power of God, by which I shall be glorified before men.' They took, therefore, the stone away from the mouth of the tomb. 'And Jesus, lifting up His eyes, said, Father, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast heard Me. And I know that Thou hearest Me always, but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.' By this prayer Jesus proclaims that He is both God and Man. He proclaims Himself *Man*, for in the inferiority of His Sacred Humanity, united to the Divinity, He says His Father hears Him always. He proclaims Himself *God* by calling God His Father,

the Father who sent Him, and by styling Himself His Son, the same Son of God who, a few moments before, said He was the Resurrection and the Life. As *God*, He is from all eternity; as *Man*, He was born in time. As *God*, He, with His Father, receives our prayers; as *Man*, His prayers are heard by His Divine Personality, and by the Person of God, His Father, to whom He is perfectly equal as to His Divinity. 'Jesus Christ,' says Dom Calmet, 'had always to guard against men thinking Him inferior to the Father. Whenever He prays and speaks as a Man, and in this respect inferior to His Father, He mingles in His prayer some shade or word which shows His equality to Him, or else after His prayer He performs some action which shows His power and proves His Divinity.' In this case, after having thanked God that He has heard Him, lest any might imagine that He had ever prayed and not been heard, He adds: 'And I know that Thou hearest Me always, but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me,' that I am Thy Son, and am equal to Thee in power and in will.

After this Divine petition He cries with a loud voice: 'Lazarus, come forth.' He commands as Lord and Master of life and death, to show that He is raising Lazarus by His own power. He raises His voice to show clearly what He has said before (St. John v. 25), 'that the hour cometh,

and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.' Directly Jesus speaks Lazarus comes forth from the tomb, full of life and vigour, obedient to the voice of Him who has awakened him from the sleep of death.

And *how* does he come forth ? With his hands and feet bound with bands. 'Miracle on miracle!' exclaims St. Basil. *Admirare miraculum in miraculo, pedes institis ligatos, quasi nullo obstaculo ad mortem, quippe roborantis vis major quam impedientis erat.*

At the voice of Jesus, Lazarus, dead for four days, comes from the tomb full of life. He comes clothed in his winding-sheet, with his hands and feet bound with linen bands. 'O double miracle!' exclaims the holy Bishop of Cæsaræa. 'It is an incomparably greater miracle than if Lazarus had come forth from the tomb with his fetters broken, his winding-sheet torn, and his eyes opened.' 'Truly Jesus has shown that He is God,' adds St. Augustine, 'because in raising Lazarus as He did He has worked a miracle which is not only beyond all the laws of Nature, but which exceeds anything which even the most lively faith could expect.'

The miracle of raising Lazarus is proved ; even the Jews themselves are forced to acknowledge it. They saw Lazarus sick, dead, and buried. Four days after his death they have themselves, at the command of Jesus, removed the stone from the tomb where his body lay ; they have per-

ceived the putrid odour that came from the corpse; they have heard the voice of Jesus saying, 'Lazarus, come forth'; they have seen Lazarus come forth from the tomb, bound with bands, and enveloped in a winding-sheet, and they have unbound the hands and feet of Lazarus when commanded to do so by Jesus after He had restored Lazarus to life.

Jesus worked this miracle that the Son of God might be glorified by it—*ut glorificetur Filius Dei per eum* (St. John xi. 4)—and to give an indisputable proof of His Divinity and His Divine filiation. Therefore He is God, He is the Son of God. He alone holds the key of life and death, for He is the Divine Principle of resurrection and life.

III.

But the crowning proof of the Divinity of Jesus Christ is His own Resurrection. It is a decisive and absolute proof, because if, after raising others from the dead, He was able to raise Himself also, He was right in saying He was 'the Resurrection and the Life,' that He had within Himself the Principle of Life, that He was God.

We will now show how the Resurrection of Our Divine Lord is an absolute and decisive proof of His Divinity. On this point we will use the words of one whose reputation is famous and well-known—Père Bourdaloue (Sermon on the

Resurrection of Jesus Christ). His simple eloquence and severe logic are more convincing than anything we ourselves can say; only we will abridge it at times, when we find it necessary.

'Let us see how it can truly be said that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the firmest ground we have for our faith in His Divinity. You may say to me: During all His mortal life, did not the Saviour of the world perform many miracles which gave Him a right to the title of Son of God? He made demons depart, He cured men born blind, He raised to life men who had been dead and buried four days—are not all these sufficient demonstrations of His Divine power? Could His Resurrection confirm any more strongly the belief of men in Him? Yes, I say, His Resurrection *was* a further proof, and a stronger proof, of His Divinity, and this for four reasons: First, because the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was the one proof it was needful for Him to give the Jews to make them know His Divinity; second, because it was also the most convincing proof of His Divinity; third, because, of all the miracles of Jesus Christ, there is not one so affirmed or so incontestably proved as the Resurrection of His own Body; and fourth, because this miracle, more than any of His other miracles, served to propagate the faith and to establish the Church, of which the foundation is belief in, and confession of, His Divinity.

1. In the first place, is it not remarkable that, whenever Our Saviour was pressed by the Jews on the subject of His Divinity, and whenever they demanded a proof, He always gave them the same answer—His Resurrection? He made use of this proof to convince them and to confound their incredulity, for when they asked Him for a sign, He answered: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet" (that is to say, the sign of which Jonas was the type). "For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (St. Matt. xii. 39, 40). On another occasion, addressing Himself to the Pharisees, He said: "You ask Me by what miracle I will show My right to exercise the absolute and Divine power that I claim. By this sign you can judge it. Destroy this temple (of My Body), and in three days I will restore it" (*Solvite templum hoc, et in tribus diebus excitabo illud*). He could have brought forward a hundred other miracles which He had worked among them, but He passed them all over, although we may, with truth, say that each one was in itself a proof of His Divinity. He changed water into wine at the marriage feast at Cana when His Immaculate Mother asked Him to; He cured the daughter of the Canaanite woman out of Divine compassion;

He restored her son to the widow of Nain, moved by her sorrow and tears. Again, in most cases, after performing these Divine actions, He charged those whom He had healed to say nothing about it. On the occasion of His Transfiguration, when He was glorified before His three Apostles, and when His Eternal Father, speaking in Person, declared Him to be His well-beloved Son, He forbade them to publish it *until He should be risen from the dead* (St. Matt. xvii.). What is the reason of this? St. John Chrysostom gives us this reason: that in the designs of God it was the Resurrection of Jesus Christ which was ordained to be the great proof of His Divine filiation; this miracle was to put a seal on all the other miracles He had performed. On this miracle depended all the others, for Our Saviour had said that He was equal to His Father, and was God even as His Father was God, and in order to show all men that He was God, He said that He would rise again three days after His death. Therefore, if He had not been the Being whom He said He was, it was impossible for Him to rise again, because by permitting the miracle of His Resurrection, God would have been authorizing an imposture and confirming a lie. If, then, after this declaration, He rose from the dead, it follows by a necessary sequence that He was God. Being God, all His other miracles subsist, for it is natural only for God to work miracles. On the other hand, if He had not risen from the

dead, all belief in His Divinity would have been destroyed, from His own words. His Divinity destroyed, His miracles would have no power, His words would be only deceit, His life an artifice and an illusion, all Christian life a phantom and deception, and hence the literal application of those words of St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 14): "If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

'2. Why did Christ choose this miracle in preference to all others to prove His Divinity? Oh, Christians! can you imagine anything more striking or more marvellous than for Christ to raise Himself from the dead? "Miracles," says St. Augustine, "are for intelligent creatures the language and the voice of God, and the greatest miracle is the Resurrection from death to life. But among all resurrections which is the most miraculous? Is it not to give one's self life, and to rise again by one's own power?" It is not, then, without reason that Jesus Christ points especially to this miracle to prove that He is God and the Son of God. Indeed, it behoves only a God to say, as He did: "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it up again" (St. John x. 18). "The one is as easy to me as the other, and as I shall not lay it down until I will, so also I will take it up again when it pleases Me." Only a God could express Himself in this manner. "Before the coming of Jesus Christ," says St. Ambrose, "men were raised

from the dead, but it was by other men. Elias, by a breath, reanimated the corpse of the son of the Sunamitess; and again, by the prayer of Elias, the child of the widow of Sarepta, dead of faintness and hunger, was restored full of life and vigour to his desolate mother. But," continues the saint, "those who were then raised to life received life from another, and those who performed these miracles only performed them in others. The unheard-of marvel was that the same Man at one and the same time performed the double miracle of raising from death and of raising Himself from death." Such a thing had never been heard of, and this is the miracle that God reserved for His Son, in order to declare to the world that He was at the same time God and Man—*Man* because He was raised from the dead, and *God* because He raised Himself from the dead. Jesus Christ entered into the kingdom of death, not as a subject, but as a sovereign; not as a slave, but as a conqueror; not as obeying a law, but as rejoicing in perfect liberty. In order to leave this kingdom by the Resurrection He required no assistance. He needed no prophet to pray for Him, no one to command Him to rise, no one to draw Him from the tomb by force, because, being God, He needed only the assistance of His own Divine power.

'3. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is also the most authentic proof He could give of His Divinity. This is the reason why the whole

synagogue conspired so strenuously against Him to prevent the world believing in His Resurrection. The Jews were certain that if once the belief in His Resurrection was established, the belief that He was the Messias and the Son of God would also be held by all. But what happened? By a wonderful dispensation of Providence, of all the articles of our Religion, and of all the miracles on which our faith is based, *not one* is so confirmed, *not one* is so incontestibly proved. "Even a pagan or an infidel," says St. Augustine, "examining, without prejudice, all the circumstances of this miracle, would be forced to acknowledge its truth. And what is still more astounding," continues the holy Doctor, "is that the two things which would, naturally speaking, be the greatest obstacles to the faith in the Resurrection—that is to say, the hatred of the Pharisees and the incredulity of the Apostles—are exactly the two means used by God to support and strengthen it."

'The most bitter enemies of Our Saviour contributed in spite of themselves, and even by their hatred itself, to verify the miracle of His Resurrection, and in consequence to establish the faith in His Divinity. Scarcely is Jesus Christ dead than His enemies go to Pilate, and say to him: "Sir, we have remembered that that Seducer said, while He was yet alive: *After three days I will rise again*" (St. Matt. xxvii. 63). "He has publicly engaged Himself to do this, and has offered this

sign as a proof of His former words and works. All the people wait for the fulfilment of this promise of His, and if His body should now disappear, it would be the confirmation of a most pernicious error." Pilate said to them: "You have a guard; go, guard it as you know." Then the sepulchre was surrounded by soldiers; the stone at the entrance was sealed; nothing was omitted to insure the safe guarding of the Body. But when, in spite of all their care and precaution, after three days the Body of Our Saviour is not found in the tomb, what do the Pharisees say? They declare that at night, whilst the guard slept, the disciples came and took it away! "But," answers St. Augustine, "how could they approach the tomb, roll away the stone, and carry away the Body without waking any of the soldiers? Again, if the guard was asleep, how could they tell that the Body was taken or who took It away? And how is it that the disciples, who were so timid and weak, should, all of a sudden, become so courageous that they faced the guards, and, braving all personal danger, dared to steal a body that was guarded by the public seal? Moreover, when they had done this daring deed, what was their object in making everyone believe a thing which they knew to be utterly false? What could they hope from that? Because if they had stolen the Body it was clear to them that Jesus Christ was *not* risen from the dead. As, in that

case, they had been deceived, and had exposed themselves to the hatred of the nation for His sake, would it not be natural for them to renounce Him now that they saw that He had been deluding them? Far from upholding His interests, would they not declare to the magistrates that He was an impostor?—a testimony that the entire synagogue would be only too delighted to receive, and which would gain for them the affection of all the people."

'However, the Jews were absolutely defeated in their attempts to disprove the Resurrection of Our Saviour. The lie they told was so evident that the Resurrection was universally believed. Even Josephus, the historian, in spite of any desire he may have had to obscure the glory of Jesus Christ, was forced to own to it, and in order that the Gentiles as well as the Jews might render homage to the Risen God, we are told by Tertullian that Pilate, being convinced of the truth of this miracle, wrote to Tiberius concerning it.

'But what appears most surprising, and at the same time most worthy of our admiration, is that we see the Apostles, who, during their Master's lifetime, could not understand the mystery of the Resurrection; who, during His Passion, almost despaired; and who, after His Death, looked on all He had told them as parables and similitudes—these same Apostles now became the preachers and propagators of a

doctrine which before appeared to them impossible. What was it wrought this change in them? What but their own assurance of the truth of His Resurrection? Could any power less than that of the Most High transform such obstinate incredulity into such firm and lively faith? So, I repeat, it is in virtue of this faith in the Resurrection of Our Saviour that Christianity has spread, that the Gospel has been preached, and that the Divinity of Our Lord has been believed to the uttermost ends of the earth, in spite of all the powers of hell striving against it.

'4. We have only to notice, when the Church was still in its infancy, how the Apostles never preached about Jesus Christ in the synagogues without bringing forward His Resurrection as an indisputable proof of His Divinity—*Hunc Deus suscitavit tertia die* (Acts x. 40). "It is He," they say, "who rose the third day; it is He who the God of our fathers glorified; it is He whom you crucified, but who has since appeared in a new life." They brought this forward as the most efficacious and invincible article of their preaching, as though all their apostleship was reduced to this one point. St. Luke tells us they all submitted to the strength of this testimony. The Jews could not resist it, the Gentiles were persuaded of it, the Christians all believed it, and St. John Chrysostom tells us that immediately after the catechumens

had made their profession of faith in the Resurrection they were baptized. Why was this? It was because to profess faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was to declare that He was God, and to declare Him to be God was to embrace His religion, because it has been proved that the Christian religion is founded on the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and that the Divinity of Jesus Christ has been authentically proved by the miracle of His Resurrection.'

Such are the words of Bourdaloue, uttered by him before a large and intelligent congregation—words worthy of so great an orator. We may be asked, Who saw Jesus Christ after He rose from the dead? St. Paul tells us in his First Epistle to the Corinthians (xv. 6 *et seq.*): 'Then He was seen by more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom many remain until this present . . . and last of all He was seen also by me.' Then it is true, and substantiated by personal evidence, that this Jesus Christ who worked many miracles, this Jesus Christ who raised the dead to life, this Jesus Christ who raised Himself to life, in spite of the malice and hatred of the Jews, is really and truly God. His own Resurrection corroborates all His preceding miracles, confirms the truth of His words and the holiness of His teaching, and gives the most unanswerable proof of His Divinity. For if it is true to say that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and is Divine, it is certain that His

religion is Divine. He came forth from the tomb by His own individual power to give us the greatest proof of His Divinity, and to attest that He came from the bosom of God. If, then, He comes from the bosom of God, the doctrine which He teaches is a Divine doctrine, the works that He does are the works of God, the miracles He performs are the miracles of a God, the Passion that He suffers is the Passion of a Man-God; and in the midst of the humiliations and opprobrium of that Passion the Divinity of Jesus Christ shines forth as a clear, bright light piercing the surrounding darkness. His Divinity is that bright gleam that turns night into day, and that will make itself seen and felt even when His enemies put forth all their powers to eclipse it. His Divinity directs all and presides over all; His Divinity rules over the hatred of His enemies and puts a boundary to its power; and at length it is His Divinity that confounds and condemns them. Jesus Christ showed that He was God during His earthly life, He proved, above all, that He was God in His Resurrection, but He also gave us proofs that He was God in His Passion and Death. These proofs we will examine in the following pages.

After considering these things, surely the true Christian will not fail to grieve in thinking that there are men so blind that they cannot see the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and that there are others, again, so bold as to dare to deny His

Divinity in spite of all evidence. He will desire, as far as possible, to repair these cruel insults cast at Our Divine Saviour; therefore, anticipating this pious wish, we will place at the end of each chapter an act of reparation, which will be but the natural outpouring of the soul after reading the history of Our Saviour's love and sufferings.

CHAPTER I

THE FEAR AND SADNESS OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES. THESE SENTIMENTS OF OUR DIVINE SAVIOUR ARE NOT IN ANY WAY INCOMPATIBLE WITH HIS DIVINITY

After his sacrilegious communion the traitor Judas, consumed with malice and hatred, departs from the supper-room and goes to the Pharisees, to accomplish the awful design he has conceived of betraying his Divine Master. Whilst His enemies are thus busying themselves, making preparations for His seizure and imprisonment, Our Divine Lord, His heart burning with generous love, retires with His eleven Apostles to the Garden of Olives, that hallowed spot which was destined to be the first scene of His dolorous Passion. It was in the garden of delights, the terrestrial paradise, that the struggle of the first Adam took place. 'It is also in a garden,' says St. Cyril, 'that the second Adam, Jesus Christ, must commence His Passion, by which He will repair the evil done to us by the sin of the first Adam.'

Our Saviour, having arrived with His Apostles

at the Mount of Olives, turns to eight of them, and tells them to remain here and pray whilst He takes with Him Peter, James, and John, and enters the garden where He is accustomed to retire for prayer. Scarcely has He entered the garden than 'He begins to fear, to be weary, to grow sorrowful, and be sad.' It would be ignorant and erroneous to suppose that these sentiments of fear, sorrow, and weariness were in any way incompatible with the Divine Person of Jesus Christ; but we will pause and reverently consider *why* Our Saviour experienced these feelings.

The Evangelist tells us that Our Divine Saviour 'began to fear, to be weary, to grow sorrowful, and to be sad'—*Cæpit pavere* (St. Mark xiv. 33), *et tædere* (St. Mark xiv. 33), *contristari* (St. Matt. xxvi. 37), *et mæstus esse* (St. Matt. xxvi. 37). Theologians tell us that Jesus Christ did not experience these human passions as we do. He had an absolute control over them, and used them as He desired, also He could prevent them when it pleased Him.

We behold Him full of courage as He leaves the supper-room, although He knows full well what awaits Him in the Garden of Olives and in Jerusalem. Yet He shows no sign of fear, of disgust, or of sadness. He is supremely calm, for as His passions are under His control, not one of them can trouble Him until He wills it. But now He has arrived at the place of conflict,

where He will permit these human passions to rise within Him. Having arrived at the Garden of Gethsemani, He will, of His own free will, 'begin to fear, to grow sorrowful,' and when at length this fear and this sadness have arrived at their summit, and are on the point of causing His death, He will command them to cease and cause them to disappear, without leaving any further trace than He shall deem expedient. Then shall we see Him once more animated with a supernatural strength and valour, going to meet those who have come to capture Him.

To be able thus to command his passions is beyond the power of any ordinary man; only the Man-God can do this. A man, who is man only, well knows the strength of his passions, their power over him, their repeated assaults in spite of all his efforts to crush them. Let us pause for a few moments and reflect on this difference between the Man-God and ourselves; it will assist us in the contemplation of the mysteries we are about to consider.

No one disputes that all men have passions, likewise there is no doubt that Jesus Christ had human passions. There was, however, a great difference between His passions and ours. Our passions are humiliating for us from their *principle*, their *effects* and their *end* — by their *principle*, because they rise within us, without our will, or even against our will; by their *effects*, because they obscure and prejudice our reason,

weaken our will, trouble our heart, and lead to evil; by their *object* and their *end*, because with us their object or end is often fanciful, dangerous, and even criminal. With Jesus Christ it was quite the contrary. His passions were never roused without His willing it; they were innocent, and they had for their sole object or end the glory of His Father and the salvation of souls.

Moreover, Jesus Christ had not all the passions that we have. He had only those that are essential to human nature—that is to say, as regards the passions of the *body*, He suffered hunger, thirst, weariness, and death; but He could not suffer sickness or disease. As regards the passions of the sensitive appetite, or passions of the *soul*, He suffered disgust, sadness, fear, sorrow, joy, and love. He could not have any guilty passion, any passion that leads to evil. He who was sanctity itself, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the most pure Virgin, could not have the slightest shadow of sin.

In becoming man for us, He took to Himself all that is essentially inherent to our nature without that which could make Him an accomplice in our sin. 'Remaining substantially what He was,' says Théodote d'Ancyre, 'God took our passions when He united Himself to a passable nature, in order that He might at the same time be glorified as God and suffer as Man.' 'It behoved Him in all things to be made like

unto His brethren' (Heb. ii. 17) that He might exercise mercy towards us.

He took upon Himself, therefore, all our human passions, without the disorders that arise from them, in the same way as He took the flesh of the first Adam, without his sin. He commences His Passion in sorrow, in weariness, and in fear, and from this we may learn two things. In the first place, wishing to prove that He is more than an ordinary man, that He is God, He *caused* Himself to feel these humiliating passions of sorrow, weariness, and fear. If He felt these sentiments, it was because He *willed* to feel them, in the same way as He willed to feel hunger and thirst. St. Augustine explains this in the following manner: 'Consider the power of Christ. You feel sorrow without willing it. Jesus Christ was sorrowful, but only because He willed it. Jesus Christ suffered hunger, it is true, but only because He willed it; He slept, it is true, but only because He willed to sleep; He was sad, it is true, but only because He willed to be sad; He died, it is true, but He died only because He willed it Himself. He had the power to suffer these things or not as He willed.' In another place the same holy Doctor says: 'No man amongst us is born because he wills it, or dies because he wills it. Jesus Christ is born *when* He wills, He dies *when* He wills. He is born *as* He wills—of a Virgin; He dies *as* He wills—on a cross. All that He wills He does, because

in Him the Divinity was but clothed in the Humanity. One Christ, God and Man' ('De Symbolo Serm. ad Catech.,' iii., n. 8). This fear, this weariness, this disgust which Jesus Christ experienced in the Garden of Olives are, therefore, in Him some of the manifestations of His liberty and power — in a word, they are the effects of His Divinity, by which He had sovereign power over all the human passions He assumed when He became Man for us.

Again, the Doctors of the Church tell us that, by these sentiments of fear, weariness, and sadness, Jesus Christ wished to give us another proof of the *reality* of the Humanity which He took upon Himself when He became incarnate and was born of the most pure Virgin Mary. His Divine foresight, piercing the darkness of coming ages, saw that a time would come when senseless men would dare assert that, in becoming Man, He took to Himself only an 'imaginary' humanity. Wishing, therefore, to prove beforehand that His Humanity was *real*, and—sin excepted—like unto ours in all respects, He began His Sacred Passion by rousing within Himself some of those innocent human passions which He possessed as Man—passions which are common to all men — *Cæpit pavere, et tædere, contristari et mœstus esse.*

His Soul is sorrowful—*Tristis est anima Mea.* By this sorrow He proves that He is *Man.* His Soul is sorrowful *because He wills it*, and thus He

proves that He is *God*—'*Usque ad mortem.*' He is sorrowful unto death, by which He would tell us that the sorrow He feels is so intense as to be sufficient to cause His Death were He not sustained by His Divinity. This is what St. Hilary expresses when he says: *Tanta est tristitia, ut nisi virtus Divina perseveraret, perduceret usque ad mortem.*

Again, we may note another remarkable circumstance. Had He so willed, Jesus Christ could have suffered these humiliating feelings away from all His Apostles, alone, in the sight of the Angels. Had this been the case, only the Angels could have borne testimony to the change wrought in His Person. But He would not have it so. He willed that Peter, James, and John, those three chosen ones who had witnessed His glorious Transfiguration, should now, following Him closely, be witnesses of His mortal agony—that they who on Thabor had seen His garments shining and white as snow should see them now dyed scarlet with His Life's Blood.

Let us, then, ask these Apostles if Jesus Christ is really God. Peter, changed, converted, and appointed to confirm the faith of his brethren, answers in his own name and in the name of his colleagues: 'We indeed know Jesus Christ, "having been made eyewitnesses of His Majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory: this voice coming down to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in

whom I have pleased Myself, hear ye Him. And this voice we heard brought from heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount" ' (2 St. Pet. i. 16-18). As though he would say: 'We heard this testimony of God the Father, and this testimony, joined to the radiance of celestial glory with which He was surrounded, gave us an evident proof that He was God, even as His Father was God.'

But what was this celestial word, spoken by the Father and testified to by St. Peter as a proof of the Divinity of Jesus Christ? St. Peter tells us: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I have pleased Myself.' O sublime word! St. Ambrose remarks ('Tract. de Fide,' lib. i., xiii., n. 83): 'The Heavenly Father did not say, *This is My creature;* He did not say, *This is the work of My hands*, or *This is My Servant;* but He said: *This is My Son*, whom you see in glory. He said: This is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob—the God who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, of whom Moses spoke when he said: This is He who sent me. Therefore this is He,' concludes St. Ambrose, 'who gave the law, who spoke to Moses; this is the God of Patriarchs, the God of Prophets.'

But now this same Jesus Christ to whom God the Father testified so highly on Mount Thabor is in the Garden of Gethsemane, and behold Him plunged in grief, overwhelmed with fear. He is God on the holy Mount of which St. Peter speaks,

as also on the borders of the Jordan, where three years ago He was baptized, and as truly and really is He God, here in the Garden of Olives, where He lies prostrate in sorrow and in fear, as He was God when surrounded by magnificence and glory. 'Jesus Christ, yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever' (Heb. xiii. 8).

Oh, let not this sorrow and fear of Our Divine Saviour in the Garden dim in the least degree our faith in His Divinity, for this very fear and sorrow had been foretold by the prophet when he said, speaking of Jesus Christ: 'My Heart is troubled within Me, and the fear of death is fallen upon Me; fear and trembling are come upon Me, and darkness hath covered Me' (Ps. liv. 5, 6). Yes, this has been predicted, and it must come to pass. But it is because God had designed that it should come to pass that it was predicted, and it came to pass because, as St. Paul says: 'It behoved Jesus Christ in all things to be made like unto His brethren' that He might show them mercy. Having chosen to become *Man* for us, He must act as Man, and suffer as Man, in order to give the most clear and sensible proofs of His true Humanity. But as He was at the same time *God*, He must show that He is above all human weakness; He must show that He has dominion over His passions, and that He can use them or not at His own good pleasure. As *God*, then, He commanded His passions to act, and when their action had

brought Him even to the point of death, He bade them cease troubling Him, and this by His own power.

Act of Reparation.

O beloved Saviour, far from being scandalized by seeing Thy fear and agony, Thy pain and weariness in the Garden, I prostrate myself before Thee in loving admiration. I adore Thy Divine power, which Thou didst show in calling forth and submitting to these human passions for the salvation of man. It was Thy love for man which caused Thee to feel this sorrow and fear, and under this disguise of a trembling, suffering man my faith recognises Thy Divinity, which disposed and arranged all things for the reconciliation of sinners with Thy Eternal Father. My faith tells me that in Thy Body, bruised and suffering, abides that strength and virtue which gave health to the poor woman in the Gospel, and which strengthens not only the bodies, but also the souls of all the poor children of Adam.

I cast myself upon my knees before Thee, O adorable Redeemer, and I offer Thee Thy Divine sorrow, in expiation for the sins of the world which caused it. I offer it to Thee in a special manner in reparation for the awful blasphemies uttered, especially in these days, by those unhappy men, who, seduced by the false joys of the world, and carried away by the torrent of their

tumultuous passions, dare to deny Thy Divinity after Thou hast given us so many proofs of it. Yea, Lord, I believe the plenitude of the Divinity resides within Thee, in spite of Thy sadness and humiliation in the Garden. By this act of faith, which I beseech Thee to render meritorious, I desire to make reparation to the best of my power for the horrible outrages Thou receivest from blind, ungrateful men.

I adore Thy Divinity, O my dearest Saviour, and I unite my adoration to the adoration of all the angels who beheld Thee sad and abandoned in the Garden of Olives. I unite it to all the acts of adoration rendered to Thee by Mary, Thy Immaculate Mother. I unite it, above all, to all the adoration Thou didst render Thyself —that is to say, the adoration rendered to Thy Divinity by Thy Sacred Humanity from the moment of Its union with the uncreated Word.

My ardent desire is to make reparation also for the great insults Thou dost receive each day from those unfortunate souls who soil their lips, their pen, and their heart with vile blasphemies against Thy infinitely adorable Divinity.

CHAPTER II

THE PRAYER OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES. THIS PRAYER IS WORTHY OF THE MAN-GOD

In considering Jesus Christ in the Garden of Olives at the commencement of His dolorous Passion, we must not separate His fear and sadness from the humble prayer He addresses to His Heavenly Father. Let us see how grand, how sublime this prayer is.

All the prayer of Our Divine Saviour in the Garden consists in this expression: *Pater, transeat a Me calix iste, verumtamen non Mea voluntas, sed Tua fiat* ('My Father, let this chalice pass from Me, nevertheless not My will but Thine be done'). In this prayer there are two words which strike us. They are the words *transeat* and *fiat*. The word *transeat* applies to the chalice—*transeat calix iste* ('let this chalice pass'). The word *fiat* applies to the will of the Eternal Father—*Fiat voluntas Tua* ('Thy will be done'). Our Divine Saviour implores two things—that the chalice may pass from Him (*transeat a Me calix iste*), and that

the will of His Father be done (*Fiat voluntas Tua*).

In order to throw more light on this prayer of Our Divine Lord, with a view to proving how worthy it is of the Man-God, we will again have recourse to the teachings of theology and of the Doctors of the Church.

Let us, then, divide this prayer into two parts, so that we may the better understand it. We will now consider the first part—*Pater, transeat a Me calix iste*—and afterwards we will turn to the concluding half of the prayer—*Non mea voluntas sed Tua fiat.*

1. *Pater, transeat a Me calix iste* ('My Father, let this chalice pass from Me'). Jesus Christ knew that the hour had arrived when He must suffer and die for us. Now, as He comes to pray in the Garden, He sees the immediate approach of His Passion, His Death, and all the sufferings that would accompany it. He beheld this terrible Passion, this ignominious Death, as a chalice full of bitterness, and He said to His Father: '*Transeat*' ('Let this chalice pass from Me').

We must never suppose that Our Divine Saviour did not wish to suffer for mankind. So ardently did He desire it that He said with His own lips to St. Peter, who wished to protect Him from His enemies: 'The chalice which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?' (St. John xviii. 11). He accepts this bitter chalice

which His Father sends Him, and He accepts it lovingly. If, then, He prays His Father to remove this chalice from Him, it is also because He sees it, as it were, full of the sins of men, and He beholds it presented to Him by the hands of these sinful men whom He has done so much to save. It was looking on the chalice in this light that caused Our Divine Lord to implore His Father to remove it from Him if possible—'*Pater, si possibile est, transeat a Me calix iste.*' Let us examine this more closely.

Jesus Christ loved all men—so much did He love them that He came to suffer and die for them—but with a special love He loved His own chosen people, the Jews. How He loved them! In their midst He was born, He passed His days; for their sake He worked His wonderful miracles, and, as the Jews themselves bore witness, He did good wherever He went.

For all these favours this unhappy nation returned only the blackest ingratitude. And now, as He prays in agony in the Garden, Our Divine Saviour foresees that they will put the seal on all their sins by putting Him to death. Jesus feels His Heart wounded to the core at the thought of what His own cherished people will do to Him.

In His agony He falls to the ground, and presses His Sacred Face to the earth. He shows His Father how deep is the wound His ungrateful people have inflicted on His Heart, and He

pleads for the Jewish nation, who are about to seal their condemnation: 'My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me.' He does not mean by these words that He wishes to refuse His sufferings and death; He prays that He may not undergo these sufferings and this death at the hands of His chosen people. He wants to spare them this last awful crime. It is as though He said: 'My Father, this chalice is too bitter for Me, it is too bitter for My Heart, which has always loved this nation so much. Let it pass from Me, if possible, O My Father! At least, let it be some stranger who puts Me to death, some savage, barbarous nation to whom I have not shown such favours. It would pain Me less, O My Father, to die by the hands of a people plunged in darkness and in ignorance; but to die by the hands of My own people, among whom I have lived, and for whom I have done so much, this, O My Father, is what pains and wounds My Heart more than anything else. *Transeat a Me calix iste.*'

This is the interpretation St. Jerome gives us of this sublime prayer of Our Saviour ('In Matt.,' lib. iv., xxvi., n. 39). It is not the fear of suffering, but His love for the Jews that causes Him to beg that He need not drink the chalice presented to Him. St. Jerome continues: 'Notice He does not say, Let *the* chalice pass from Me, but *this* chalice'—that is to say, '*This* Passion and Death from the hands of My people,' who

thus draw upon themselves the most terrible anathemas and awful judgments.

The Venerable Bede agrees with St. Jerome, and in his commentary on St. Luke he thus paraphrases the prayer of Our Divine Saviour: 'My Father, it it were possible that, without the loss of the Jews, the multitude of the Gentiles might believe in Me, I would refuse to undergo My Passion.' Christianus Druthmarus ('Exposit. in Matt.'), Raban Maur ('Comment. in Matt.'), St. Paschase ('Expos. in Matt.'), and St. Bruno d'Asti all explain it in this manner.

St. Bruno d'Asti, in his commentary on St. Matthew, gives also the reason why the Father ordained that Jesus Christ should suffer death at the hands of the Jews, although Our Saviour, from His affection for His people, desired the contrary. We give his remarkable words in the note.* We may, then, conclude that when

* These are the words of St. Bruno d'Asti: 'Voluntas Patris fuit ut Christum Judæi interficerent. Quia enim pro salute mundi moriturus erat, ut aliqua gens eum occideret, oportebat. Sed quæ alia gens Christum occidere debuit nisi illa quæ iniquior erat et quæ plus cæteris ejus sanguinem sitiebat? Deus enim neminem cogit ad peccandum, eos tamen peccare permittit qui vehementer peccare desiderant. Vult igitur Deus, ut hi tales, quorum tota voluntas prona est ad malum, sanctos suos interficiant, quatenus et his major pœna, et illis abundantior gloria crescat. . . . Ac per hoc voluit Deus Pater ut Filium suum Judæi interficerent et, quia iniquissimi erant, maximum scelus perpetrarent, quatenus mullam habeant excusationem, et majori pœnæ subjiciantur, ut veniat super eos omnis sanguis justus qui effusus est super terram.'

Jesus Christ implored His Father to remove from Him the bitter chalice prepared by His own people, His prayer was so noble and sublime as to be but the expression of His immense love for His privileged nation, whose imminent downfall made Him shudder. It was a prayer worthy of the Man-God, who came to save man, and who desired that none of those He came to save should perish. But the mystery of the bitter chalice presented to Jesus is not confined to the Jewish nation, which it represented. The expression *Transeat a Me calix iste* admits of other interpretations, and we will glance at them here, to enable us to realize better the dignity of this Divine petition.

These words also signify the repugnance that the Humanity of Jesus Christ experienced at having to submit to death, in spite of His ardent desire to suffer and be crucified for the salvation of the world. The very repugnance which discloses itself in His prayer shows us the dignity of His Person, and proves that death was not created for Him, nor by Him, and consequently He had a right to immortality *even as Man*.

Among all the children of men He is the only one who took upon Himself human nature when and as He willed—that is to say, without sin or any disorder of nature. It was sin and its consequences that introduced death into the world. Stranger to sin and its effects, Jesus Christ must, therefore, by natural consequence, be a

stranger to death. He had a right to immortality. If He had accepted death without showing any repugnance, it might have been said that He accepted it as a justly merited penalty, and thus He would have been classed with sinners—He who never sinned.

In addressing His Father thus, *Transeat a Me calix iste*, He made, then, more than a prayer. He prayed certainly, but at the same time He made a public protest against death. He would show that death was not His due, and if He accepted it in adding *Verumtamen non Mea voluntas sed Tua fiat*, it was only in order to conform Himself to the decree of His Eternal Father, to which He had submitted Himself as Son of God, and because the will of His Father was essentially His own will, as St. Ambrose would have us understand when he says: 'Voluntas Divinitatis æterna, non alia voluntas Patris, alia Filii, una enim voluntas ubi una divinitas' ('In S. Luc.,' xxii. 42, n. 60).

Nor is this all. Death is not the work of God. Death entered into the world through the malice of the demon, whom Jesus Christ Himself called 'a murderer from the beginning' (St. John viii. 44). If Jesus had accepted death without showing any repugnance, it might have been thought that He approved of it, and regarded it as the original and natural of man as the Pelagians taught.

What, then, did He do to prevent this error? At the very commencement of His prayer in the

Garden, seeing death approach Him, and accepting it for the salvation of men and in conformity to the will of His Father, He at the same time recoils from it as from a bitter and terrible chalice, and He says: *Transeat a Me calix iste.* 'By so doing,' says St. Ambrose, 'He protests against death, and condemns the demon who introduced it'—*Deus mortem non fecit, et ideo fastidit Christus quod ipse non fecit.* St. Paschase Radbert says the same thing: 'God did not create death, and that is why it is repugnant to the Son of God to submit to it.'

So we see that this prayer of Our Saviour, *Transeat a Me calix iste*, from whatever side we view it, is a prayer worthy of the Man-God. No other but He could utter a prayer so simple, so mysterious, and at the same time so sublime.

2. *Verumtamen non Mea voluntas, sed Tua fiat* ('Nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done'). Let us now examine the second part of this prayer. To understand this thoroughly we must remember that there is in Jesus Christ a *Divine* will and also a *human* will. This *human* will *as to power* is one and indivisible, but *as to act* it is divided into 'the will of nature' and 'the will of reason,' otherwise named 'will of the inferior part of the soul' and 'will of the superior part of the soul.'

Jesus Christ says: 'My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me.' This is the expression of His 'human' will—according to

nature—which, naturally, abhorred pain, and trembled at the prospect of the death on the cross. 'Nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done.' This is the voice of His *will of reason*. This *will of reason*, far from being at variance with the Divine will, which is within Him, and which is also His Father's will, is, on the contrary, in perfect harmony with it—is, in fact, identical with it.

The *first* will—that is to say, the will of *nature*—is, in Jesus Christ, a 'conditional' will—*si possibile est*. The *second* will—the will of *reason*—is an 'absolute' will—*fiat*. The first is a will of 'supplication'—*transeat;* the second is a will of 'command'—*fiat*. Sublime word! made use of by God when He created the world.

The first words—*transeat a Me calix iste*—are the expression of *weakness;* the second words—*fiat voluntas Tua*—are the expression of *strength*.

Jesus Christ does not derive this strength from without, as all men, even the holiest and most powerful, must do; the principle of this strength is within Himself. This principle within Him is the Divinity which He possesses, and which is the same in every respect as the Divinity of the Father.

In conforming to the will of His Eternal Father Jesus Christ is yielding to His own *Divine* will, and He conforms with courage, although in the inferior part of His Humanity His *natural* will abhors suffering and death. St. Ambrose speaks

of it in these words: *Quasi homo mortem recusans, quasi Deus sententiam suam servans.* Therefore, this great act of resignation which Jesus Christ exercised in the Garden of Gethsemani in saying, 'Nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done,' is an act worthy of the Man-God, and the prayer itself is worthy of the Man-God, Redeemer of Men.

We say 'Redeemer of Men,' and if we consider Jesus Christ only as 'Redeemer,' the word *fiat* that He pronounces is a true and earnest prayer, and by it He submits to all that the Father exacts from Him for the salvation of the world. But if we consider Our Saviour as Head and Founder of the Holy Church, this word *fiat* is more than a prayer, it is also a manifestation of His power.

God created the world by a *fiat* and every time this word issues from His mouth we see how creatures spring into existence. 'The creation of the world,' says Hugh of St. Victor (Serm. 64), 'foreshadowed the regeneration of the human race and the establishment and beauty of the Church.' Jesus Christ having come to renew the face of the earth, commenced by a *fiat* and it was in the Garden of Olives He pronounced it, only a few moments before going to His Death. His entire life had been an exact accomplishment of the will of His Heavenly Father, as He Himself said that His food was to do the will of His Father (*Meus cibus est ut faciam voluntatem Patris Me* · He

desired the children of His Church to imitate His conduct, and in order to encourage them He left the precept that they should follow His example. Prostrate in the Garden, He sees before Him all generations of men trampling under foot this Divine will—His Father's will. He raises His voice, and, full of the zeal that has ever consumed Him, He exclaims in the midst of His profound anguish: 'O My Eternal Father, may Thy most holy will be done in all places and at all times.' This cannot be the language of an ordinary man who resigns himself to the will of God. Surely it is the voice of the Man-God, who, by His *fiat*, produces a new creation —a new heaven, a new earth, a new heaven of chosen souls, a new earth of souls, weak and frail indeed, but adorned with the aureola of all the Christian virtues, rising from the degradation of sin after this *fiat* falls from the Redeemer's lips in the Garden of Olives.

Fiat voluntas Tua. Jesus says to His Father, 'Thy will be done,' and His voice echoes through the entire universe. The world trembles at the sound, numberless souls are sanctified—first the Apostles, then the Martyrs, the first Christians, and as time goes on all the Saints and all true Christians over whose human passions the Divine will of God reigns supreme.

Fiat voluntas Tua ('Thy will be done'). This mighty word, coming from the lips of Our Saviour, was the source of all the true piety and solid

virtue which we see in the Saints, as it was the fountain whence they derived their courage in confessing their faith before tyrants and in practising it in the midst of the allurements of a corrupt and seductive world.

Fiat voluntas Tua. This mighty word it was which gave zeal to the Apostles, strength to martyrs, fervour to confessors, courage to penitents, purity to virgins.

Fiat voluntas Tua. This mighty word, worthy of a Man-God, has consoled the afflicted, has encouraged timid and fearful souls, and has given to all patience in the midst of tribulations.

Fiat voluntas Tua. This mighty and sublime word has merited the conversion of sinners, the perseverance of the just, and has formed the beauty, holiness, and glory of all the Church. It is the voice of the Head, who has brought salvation to all His members; as St. Leo says (Serm. 56): *Hæc vox capitis salus est totius corporis.* It is the word which will be repeated by all the children of the Church to the end of time, and as long as there are men on earth their voices will ascend to heaven with these words: *Fiat voluntas Tua, sicut in cælo et in terra.*

ACT OF REPARATION.

O adorable Saviour, I thank Thee for this word which Thou didst utter—*Fiat voluntas Tua*—which has resounded through the universe, and has worked such prodigies for mankind.

O grant that it may yet find an echo in the hearts of those men in our own day who pass their lives in a state of enmity with Thee, on account of their innumerable sins. Grant that it may resound especially in the hearts of those who now dare to deny Thy Divinity, in order that they may thus with less reproach bend the knee to their own vile passions, which reign so shamelessly over them. Make them feel that, in order to be saved, they must trample under foot their brutal appetites, and conform themselves to the will of Thy Eternal Father, otherwise they can only experience remorse, trouble, and despair in this world and in the world to come.

Thou, O God, dost command Death, for Thou, O God, art essentially immortal. Save, I beseech Thee, these poor children of Adam from that everlasting death which they view with such indifference, without considering the awful punishments they must suffer. In reparation for the great insults they pay Thee, I offer Thee, O my Divine Jesus, Thine own Heart—Thy Heart that has loved man so much, Thy Heart that prayed so fervently in the Garden of Olives, Thy Heart that has grieved over the loss of Thy chosen

ones, Thy Heart that was wounded and broken by the sins of ungrateful men.

O my beloved Jesus, I can offer Thee nothing so great or so worthy of Thee as Thine own Divine Heart — Heart infinitely amiable, infinitely loving, infinitely beloved by the Father. And wouldst Thou that I should offer Thee yet another gift, in order to repair these insults and to intercede for these poor sinners? Ah, then, I bring Thee an offering of great value, and one that Thou dost prize—it is the Immaculate Heart of Thy Mother Mary—this heart so like unto Thine own, this heart Thou didst fashion with Thine own Hands, this heart that is peerless and without equal among the purest creatures on earth or in heaven. Yes, I offer Thee Mary's pure Heart.

O most holy Virgin, offer it thyself to Thy Divine Son, so that, beholding His own Heart and thine, He will pardon all poor sinners, and in particular those who, by denying His Divinity, have most deeply wounded His loving Heart.

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT COMBAT OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES, WHICH IN A SPECIAL MANNER REVEALS HIS DIVINITY

In the Garden of Gethsemani Jesus is sad, He prays, He undergoes a terrible agony.

This agony is a *struggle*, it is a combat which Jesus sustains with courage. Let us now consider it in detail.

Jesus Christ received two baptisms, one of water and one of blood. The first took place on the banks of the Jordan ; the second began in the Garden of Olives and ended on Calvary. The first preceded the combat in the desert, the second accompanied that of Gethsemani.

But what a difference there was between these two combats, as judged by their baptisms! In the combat in the desert Jesus was fighting the prince of darkness ; He confounded and vanquished him, and put him to flight. In the second combat, that of the agony, it was very different ; we here behold a struggle between Divine Mercy in the Person of Jesus Christ, and Divine Justice identified with the Person of the

Eternal Father. It was a struggle between the Heart of Jesus, who longed to redeem men, who put Himself in their place, that they might be in His place, and the Heart of His Father, who was justly angered against sinners, and whose justice claimed its rights. And it is this struggle that reveals to us in a special manner the Divinity of Our Saviour.

Seeing Jesus Christ pale, sad, and dejected in the Garden of Gethsemani, would not one naturally say, at a glance, that He was grieving over some sorrow of His own? But we know that this is not the case. He is occupied with the salvation of men, and He gives a proof of this, as the Venerable Bede remarks, by going to His Apostles in the midst of His sorrow and pain and waking them, in order that they may join with Him in prayer for the human race. Twice He interrupts His prayer to exhort His Apostles to watch and pray after His example; then He goes and prays the third time. He suffers intensest agony, and He sweats blood. So excessive, indeed, is this sweat that the ground beneath Him is dyed with His Blood—*Factus in agonia prolixius orabat, et factus est sudor ejus sicut guttæ sanguinis, decurrentis in terram* (St. Luke xxii. 43, 44).

These, then, are the bare facts, but let us examine the mystery more closely.

When the Canaanite woman came to Jesus and prayed Him to have pity on her, saying, 'Son of David, have mercy on me' (St. Matt.

xv. 22), it was not for herself she prayed. For whom was it she prayed so earnestly? This poor woman had a daughter who was possessed by the devil — *Filia mea male a dæmonio vexatur.* The mother made no distinction between herself and her child. True, she prayed Jesus to have mercy on *her* (*miserere mei*), but in reality it was for her child she prayed. In her prayer she put herself in her child's place. Her maternal love united the two hearts of mother and child so closely that, in her tenderness, she blended her child's heart with her own, and prayed as from *one* heart: 'Son of David, have mercy on me.'

Jesus Christ did the same in the Garden of Olives; He did it in a manner unspeakably more sublime, more intense, for He did it in a manner all Divine. He saw that He, and He alone, was worthy of blessing, that this blessing was His *right* from all eternity by reason of His Divine nature. As St. Paul says (Rom. ix. 5): 'Christ is over all things, God, blessed for ever.' He saw at the same time all men doomed to eternal malediction on account of their sins, He saw this malediction suspended over their heads, and He saw that Divine Justice, inexorable and irritated against them, demanded a satisfaction in proportion to the offence it had received.

At this sight what does Jesus do? Full of love and tenderness for poor fallen man—infinitely more so than the Canaanite mother for

her afflicted child—He interposes Himself between the Divine Justice, which is ready to smite, and poor sinners, who are threatened to be its victims. He puts Himself in the sinners' place, as the Canaanite woman put herself in her child's place, and He gave Himself up willingly and lovingly to satisfy for their sins by His Passion and Death, and He said: *Fiat voluntas Tua.*

At the same time, He put poor sinners in His place, identifying them, so to speak, with Himself, so that He might thereby save them from the curse which ought, by right, to fall on them. He beheld this curse descend from heaven to cover, as a garment, all guilty mankind. It appeared to Him as a chalice full of bitterness, and at once, in tenderest love for His rebel children, He collected them all under the mantle of His Divine Mercy, and, raising His Heart to His Eternal Father, He said: 'Father, let this chalice pass from Me; let this curse depart, O My Father! let it depart from *Me*, that is to say, *from My children*, whom Thou hast given Me. I am Thy Son, and as such I deserve only Thy blessing. From all eternity Thy blessing, which is Mine by right, has rested upon Me; allow Me, O My Father, to communicate it, by grace, to these guilty children whom I have gathered under the mantle of My mercy. *Transeat, transeat a Me calix iste!* Oh My Father, I beseech Thee remove all curse from the heads of these My unhappy children. My ardent desire

is that not one of them should perish under Thy curse, but that all may live, die, and rise in glory.' *Transfer a Me calicem istum, ut juxta divinam sententiam, lex maledictionis, resoluto in terræ limum naturæ fine, solvatur* (St. Ambrose, 'In Luc.,' x.).

It was thus that the Sacred Humanity of Our Saviour struggled with the Divine Justice of the Eternal Father. It was the struggle of a Man who fathomed Divine Justice, but who had absolute consciousness of what He was doing, and who was sure of His victory.

It was the struggle of a Man who undertook this conflict not for any end restricted to His own family, or home, or for the exclusive benefit of one nation or one country, but for a universal end—one which would benefit all men for all time, the entire human race and all ages. It was a struggle by which He strove to draw down heavenly blessings on all children of Adam, past, present, and to come. We behold it: it is a struggle hard and painful, which far exceeds all the powers of human imagination, and before which any human creature, and all creatures together, must inevitably recoil. This struggle, this terrible conflict, shows forth the Divinity of the combatant, in the Person of Jesus Christ.

As the struggle becomes more fierce, so also does the love of Jesus for men appear more strong and fearless. In His mortal weakness, which yet, thanks to His Divinity, does not cause

His death, Our Divine Saviour redoubles His prayer for poor sinners.

He is in an agony, it is true—*et factus in agonia, prolixius orabat*—but let us not misunderstand Him. This agony is not an agony that comes from the weakness of an ordinary man; it comes from the ardent love of the *Man* who is also *God*.

This agony shows us the Man-God as He was when the conflict was strongest, when He was about to disarm Divine Justice, so that *we* might participate in *His* benediction. 'He struggles for us,' says St. Ambrose, 'that He may make us conquerors.' It is by a gigantic effort of Divine Love that He falls into an agony, and when this agony is at its height His love still increases, and He renews and redoubles His prayer—*factus in agonia, prolixius orabat.*

It was in this supreme moment of agony that to His fervent prayer He joined most humble supplication, to the tears of His eyes He added those of His Heart, to the cries of His Voice He added the cries of His Love—*Preces supplicationesque offerens, cum clamore valido, et lacrymis* (Heb. v. 7). And beholding Him thus in His agony, Divine Justice was disarmed towards the human race. Yes, He disarmed Divine Justice by His terrible combat, but Justice, although disarmed, is not fully satisfied. Man will, indeed, be pardoned on account of the infinite merit of the agony of Jesus Christ, but

Divine Justice requires that those sins which are committed with all the malice of the human heart should likewise be detested with all the strength of will by those who committed them.

In order that this detestation and contrition on the part of men should be acceptable in the eyes of God and meritorious of life eternal, Justice demands that the sorrow for their sins be in proportion to the greatness of the injury done to God by these sins. That injury, looked upon as done to God, is infinite; therefore, a sorrow of infinite merit is required before the sins can be forgiven. But where amongst men is this sorrow to be found—sorrow sincere and meriting an eternal reward? God must, then, discover some means in order to be able to accord them complete pardon. It were vain to seek it among the guilty children of Adam, and yet it is precisely *they* who needed it. He must, then, seek it in a man who is *Man* and *God* at the same time.

Behold this Man-God is in the Garden of Olives. He is there expressly to make this great act of sorrow. 'Tis Jesus Christ, and He is there to weep for the sins of all ages, the sins of the whole world. By His 'Divinely-human' sorrow He merits true contrition for sin for all sinful men who wish to be converted; by it He reconciles earth with heaven. Having put Himself in the place of sinners, He undertakes the entire expiation of their sins. He com-

mences this expiation by an act of perfect sorrow, which comes from the depth of His Divine Heart, and He is resolved to consummate this expiation by the innumerable sufferings which await Him in Jerusalem and on Calvary.

By the penetration of His mind, Divinely enlightened, He sees, in all its heinousness, the infinite injury offered to the Divine Majesty by these sins of men, which, in His Love, He has taken upon Himself. He knows their number, their gravity, their malice, as only a Man-God *can* know it, and almost forgetting His own sanctity, His Divine innocence, and the perfect resemblance which He bears to His Eternal Father, He presents Himself before Him as being Himself the greatest of sinners. He regards the sins of men with which He is laden as though they were His own ; He *appropriates* them, so to speak ; He begs His Father to pardon them, and He makes for them a most humble and perfect act of sorrow. 'It is impossible to imagine a more perfect sorrow,' says St. Thomas. 'It surpasses all idea, human or angelic.'*

This 'sorrow' which His great love for man excites in His Heart is indeed so intense that His agony increases, and increases to such

* The word *sorrow* rather than *contrition* is used in the translation, because *contrition*, in its theological sense, is an act of the virtue of penance for one's own personal sins. Christ could not have contrition for any sin of His own as He was impeccable.

an extent that He begins to sweat Blood profusely from all the pores of His Sacred Body. His garments are saturated, and all the ground around Him is dyed red with His Precious Blood. Behold the sign of the sorrow of Jesus. Yes, truly, this sweat of Blood so extraordinary and so abundant that Jesus suffers in the Garden of Olives shows us outwardly how grand and sublime is this act of sorrow which He makes from the depth of His Heart for the sins of men.

'By this Blood which He sweat in Gethsemani,' says an ancient Father of the Church (Candidus Fuldensis, 'noni sæculi opusc. de Pass. Dom.,' viii.), 'Jesus Christ removed the old curse which weighed down the whole human race since the first man was expelled from the earthly paradise.' By this sweat of Blood Divine Justice is, at the same time, disarmed and satisfied, the ancient curse is reversed into a blessing, man is put into a state of power to repent efficaciously for sin, and he is given the hope of forgiveness. Thus the conflict which Our Divine Saviour sustained in the Garden of Gethsemani, during which He suffered the sweat of Blood in order to remove from us the Divine curse, was a conflict so terrible as to have no parallel, and it revealed in a most special manner His Divinity.

PASSIONIST PREP
STUDENT'S

ACT OF REPARATION.

O my agonizing Saviour, I acknowledge Thy Divinity, and this terrible conflict which Thou didst sustain in the Garden of Olives gives me yet a further proof of it. This glorious victory which Thou didst gain with Divine Justice, by which unhappy sinners regained their former rights, was truly the victory of the Man-God.

When I see Thee sad, dejected, and plunged in awful agony till Thy Blood gushes forth from Thy Sacred Body, oh! then, indeed, compassion awakes within my heart. But when I consider that it was in this pitiable state, pressed to the earth by suffering and humiliation, that Thou didst appease Divine Justice, that out of purest charity Thou didst put Thyself in the place of sinful man, whom Divine Justice was about to strike, oh! then, my good Jesus, my faith is reanimated, and with greater assurance than ever I am forced to exclaim: 'Behold the Man-God!'

O Divine Jesus, I adore Thee, then, as my Lord and my God, and I offer Thee all the pains Thou didst endure, especially those Thou didst undergo in the Garden of Olives in reparation for all the injuries Thou receivest from men, in particular those who have dared to blaspheme Thy Divinity.

Accept, O loving Saviour, this offering which I present to Thee in the name of all men, because,

sinners as they are, they are all my brethren, and—I dare to say it—Thy brethren also, for Thou art the first-born among us, and without Thee we should be lost for ever.

And thou, O Mary, intercede for us with thine infinitely adorable Son. In the goodness of thy maternal heart say to Him: *Parce, Domine, parce populo Tuo.* O Lord, pardon Thy blind and ungrateful children—pardon them by Thine own merits and sufferings, and for the love of Thine Immaculate Mother. *Parce, parce, populo tuo, Domine!*

CHAPTER IV

JESUS BEFORE HIS ENEMIES IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES. THE DIVINITY OF OUR SAVIOUR SHOWN FORTH IN A SPECIAL MANNER

WHILST Jesus, praying in the Garden and plunged in sorrow and agony, was occupied in disarming Divine Justice for the salvation of men, the Apostles, who were lying at some distance from Him, had fallen asleep. At Jerusalem, however, the enemies of Our Lord, and Judas, now become their chief, are far from sleeping.

In the darkness of the night they set out for the Garden of Olives. Judas walks at their head, and he has already told them that they must seize and hold fast Him whom he shall kiss, for that will be his Master, Jesus.

We will again place ourselves in the Garden of Olives, and watch what happens at the arrest of Jesus. We will see the fresh proofs this circumstance gives us of His Divinity.

Jesus has prayed earnestly for three hours, and in His agony He has sweat Blood. He now rises from the ground, and in all His strength and majesty, His struggle over, He goes again to His

Apostles, and again He finds them sleeping. He rouses them for the last time, and says to them : *Surgite eamus*—' Rise, let us go : behold he is at hand that will betray Me ' (St. Matt. xxvi. 46).

The sadness in which He has been plunged until now has suddenly disappeared, and His agony and sweat of Blood, which had seemed to bring Him to the point of death, have left no trace behind them.

We need not ask *how* this came to pass, for we have said that Jesus Christ was master of His passions, and He could not be subject to their influence. He awakened them, He directed them, and He stopped them when and as He pleased. Let us repeat it once more. A man who was *only man* could not pass thus suddenly from dejection to courage. This wonderful and sudden transition in Jesus Christ can only be explained by His Divinity.

The enemies of Our Divine Saviour, guided by Judas, flatter themselves that they will surprise Jesus in the Garden. But they are mistaken. He has watched and counted their every step, and He advances now to meet them. It is He who surprises them, and disconcerts them by His calm assurance and Divine courage. Scarcely has He bidden the eleven Apostles to rise and follow Him than He sees the twelfth—the traitor Judas—coming towards Him at the head of a crowd—*Adhuc eo loquente, ecce Judas venit et cum eo turba multa* (St. Matt. xxvi. 47).

And this crowd is very great. First come a thousand armed soldiers, then several priests, doctors of the law, senators, magistrates, Scribes and Pharisees, and besides these there are many spies and servants and slaves sent by the High Priests and the Ancients. Indeed, it might with truth be said that the whole Jewish nation is represented here. From the highest dignitaries to the lowest dregs of the people—all are assembled in the Garden of Olives. They are armed with swords and clubs, and in the darkness of the midnight they are guided by the light of numerous torches and lanterns—*Cum gladiis et fustibus* (St. Matt. xxvi. 47), *cum lucernis, et facibus, et armis* (St. John xviii. 3).

Surely anyone seeing these men enter Gethsemani at so unusual an hour of night would conclude that they were about to make a great capture. They have indeed come to capture a great One, for they have come to capture *Jesus*.

Jesus is alone. He is unarmed, He is defenceless, for He has given His Apostles no command to resist by force any who may attack Him. And even had He done so, what could the eleven do, unarmed, against so many armed and infuriated men? If Jesus Christ is only an ordinary Man, He will yield at once, for if He shows any resistance He will be immediately crushed, and instead of entering Jerusalem *alive* to be imprisoned, He will be taken there *dead* to be buried.

Thus do these men reason who have come to seize Jesus; but they are mistaken, and we will see how Our Divine Saviour confounds all their impious plans. Alone and defenceless He makes them feel again and again the power of His Divinity. Judas is at their head. He is the only one who advances to meet Jesus; he betrays Him by a false kiss of peace and friendship. It is the signal that he has arranged with the enemies of his Master, which, having received, they are to throw themselves upon Him and take Him captive. The signal is given. Judas has accomplished his cowardly treason. Jesus stands alone before His enemies—the flaming torches give all an opportunity of seeing what has passed between Judas and his Divine Master—and yet not one out of the multitude of men, well armed and resolute as they are, makes the slightest movement. In the bright glare of the torches they cannot recognise Jesus—this Jesus who is before their eyes, who is the central object of their hatred; this Jesus whom they have known for so many years, and whom they have come to the Garden thus armed to take prisoner!

Thus does the Man-God confound the malice of men. 'Behold,' says St. John Chrysostom (Hom. 83, 'In Joan.'), 'the effect of His Omnipotence! How He makes them blind, although they surround Him! Even had they no torches, they might recognise Him by His voice, and even

if the others did not recognise Him, how is it that Judas, who was so intimate with Him, did not know Him? Yet this traitor, standing at their head, recognised Him no better than they did.'

It will, then, be necessary for some one to point out Jesus Christ to them. Who will recall these stupefied men to their senses? It is Jesus Himself who does it, but He does it in a tone of Divine authority—He whom they have come to capture.

Whilst His enemies remain silent and motionless before Him, Jesus advances towards them, and says: 'Whom seek ye?' They answered Him: 'Jesus of Nazareth'—*Processit et dixit: Quem queritis? At illi dixerunt: Jesum Nazarenum* (St. John xviii. 4). Our Divine Saviour might have answered: 'You have lanterns and torches, and you seek Jesus of Nazareth. He is not far from you.' But instead Jesus, who would not use any means of escaping from them, answered them by only two words, uttered in a tone of overwhelming authority: '*Ego sum*' ('I am He'). It is the same '*Ego sum*' which formerly resounded on Mount Sinai when Moses asked God His Name—*Ego sum qui sum.*

Jesus Christ now uses this same language to His enemies in the Garden of Olives—'I am He'; that is to say, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth who am speaking to you. I am He who spoke formerly to Moses, your father, and to the prophets'—*Ego sum qui loquebar, ecce adsum* (Isa. lii.).

'Behold, perfidious Jews, senseless crowd, you know now this is Jesus of Nazareth! You have heard His voice, you have just heard this is He; hasten then, throw yourselves upon Him, seize Him, bind Him with ropes and chains. Take Him to Jerusalem, and let all the world know that at last you have captured Jesus of Nazareth.' But no, it is not thus that He has ordained.

In saying the words *Ego sum*, Jesus gave His voice a Divine power, as the prophet foretold—*Dabit voci suæ vocem virtutis* (Ps. lxvii. 34)—and these two simple words are as two thunderbolts hurled at His enemies. *Ut ergo dixit: Ego sum: abierunt retrorsum, et ceciderunt in terram* (St. John xviii. 6)—'As soon, therefore, as He had said to them, I am He, they went backward (Judas also) and fell to the ground.' Behold, they appear to be dead. A profound silence reigns; there is not the slightest movement among them. Torches, lanterns, arms, swords—all are fallen from their hands; they lie on the ground like felled trees.

Jesus remains standing, and a little distance behind Him His eleven Apostles. His enemies are disarmed and thrown to the ground by two words falling from His lips, 'because,' says St. Augustine (Tract 112, 'In St. Joan.'), 'these two words came from the lips of Him whose words are acts, and who can do whatsoever He will.... Because,' adds this holy Doctor, 'God was hidden in His Flesh.'

He has conquered them and cast them to the ground. He did it with *one* blow, He did it *alone*, and without arms ; He did it by the sound of His voice, which struck them as though it had been a club. Scribes and Pharisees, soldiers and archers, priests and slaves, all fall to the ground in the twinkling of an eye when the voice of Jesus is heard—*Ego sum.*

If in order to work this miracle He had called to His aid twelve legions of angels, it would have been a wonderful act, and we could then have recognised the Divinity of Jesus Christ, who had such authority over the heavenly hierarchy. How much more, then, must we acknowledge His Divinity when we see Him act by Himself, unsupported by any outside assistance, and acting, not by the might of His arm, like Samson, but by the power of His voice ! This is, indeed, the Lord of whom the prophet Isaias has written (Isa. ii.), who can, when He will, confound idolatry and the idolator himself by a breath of His Mouth.

Oh you who deny or doubt the Divinity of Jesus Christ, if you should see these pages you will say : 'Let us see what happens in the Garden of Gethsemani. Here are nearly two thousand men, who fall pell-mell to the ground ; these men who, a few minutes before, with hatred in their hearts and rage in their eyes, breathed forth fire and flame, now lie motionless. One Man alone is standing before them, and behind

Him are His eleven disciples. He stands erect, calm, modest, and majestic. He it is who, with two words, has struck these men to the earth. He is Jesus Christ. Throw yourselves on your knees, uncover your heads, bow down and adore Him, for He is the God who will judge you. The Divinity is present before you.'

It is manifest that it is the same Divine power that He exercised in expelling the buyers and sellers from the Temple that Jesus Christ now uses in the Garden, which inspires His enemies with terror, casts them to the ground, and confounds them. As St. Paschasias says ('In Matt.,' lib. xii., 26): *Iste terror in voce fuit? an in vultu? an in utroque? tamen quid fuerit et ubicumque, in voce an in vultu, seu qualiter cumque fuerit, manifestum est quia divina virtus in ea fuit, sicut et in templo quando omnes ejecit.*

We can imagine that if the ancient Samson had been in the Garden of Olives when all the enemies of Jesus fell backward at the sound of His voice, he would have treated them as he formerly treated the Philistines. Seeing them lying half dead on the ground, he would have slaughtered them on the spot. But the new Samson—Jesus Christ—does not act thus. Sufficient is it for Him that He has shown His enemies the power of His Divinity in striking them to the ground when they least expected it.

Knowing that they had not power to raise

themselves, He also bade them rise by that same voice that had cast them down. Seeing them prostrate on the ground, He saw in them the figure, as it were, of the reprobate punished by God, and as He was going to suffer death for the salvation of all, so, by an act of His will, He raised them from the ground. Behold them, then, standing upright once more, struck with consternation, but not converted! It is the terrible mystery of man, who, hardened in his sin, will not, even in the face of the prodigies of God, return to Him, but rather becomes more ungrateful. *O insensati Judæi!* exclaims St. Augustine. *Interrogastis, et cecidistis, levati estis, et ingrati estis* ('O senseless Jews! You have asked, and you have fallen; you are raised again, and you are still ungrateful').

Seeing them risen once more before Him, Jesus continues to give them other proofs of His Divinity before delivering Himself into their hands. Here it is neither Scribe nor Pharisee, Ancient nor Prince, priest nor soldier, who commands—it is Jesus Christ, and *only* Jesus Christ. He issues His orders, and the most rebellious must obey Him. Our Saviour now says: 'I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way' (*Dixi vobis quia Ego sum, si ergo Me quæritis, sinite hos abire*). 'This is not the language of an ordinary Man,' says St. Augustine, 'for if Jesus Christ had been only Man, He might have feared that this

would give His enemies an idea they had not before conceived of laying hands on His Apostles; at least, He might well have feared His command would not be obeyed.' But here He speaks again as the Man-God. He commands, He gives efficacy to His orders, and sees that they are obeyed. He tells them not to touch one of His disciples, and we know that, during His Passion, not one of them is imprisoned or molested in any way. *Sinite hos abire.* It is an order that must be obeyed.

By this order He obliges His enemies to respect His Apostles, otherwise we cannot explain this fact, because it is usual on taking a guilty man prisoner to detain also his accomplices, more especially when they are without weapons and deprived of all means of resistance. 'No,' says St. Chrysostom, 'do not be surprised if on this occasion they do not trouble themselves about the disciples of Jesus, whom they could have taken possession of so easily. The same Divine power that cast down the enemies of Our Saviour has withheld their hands from harming those He has taken under His protection' (*Quis illos detinuit? Non aliud quam ipsa vis quæ illos supinos prostravit*).

If, then, Jesus Christ had only to speak in order to insure the safety of His disciples, could He not have used the same means for procuring His own liberty? No, it might not be, because the hour of His Sacrifice had come.

Having issued His orders, He now speaks reproachfully to them, and He makes them realize that they can capture Him only when He wills. 'You are come out as it were to a robber with swords and clubs to apprehend Me. I sat daily with you preaching in the Temple, and you laid not hands on Me' (Matt. xxvi. 55). 'You could not capture Me on these other occasions, because it was not My will. Even now you could not lay hands on Me unless I willingly delivered Myself up to you.'

These reproaches must have been bitter to such proud, obstinate men. However, no one dared to interrupt Jesus; no one bade Him cease. They all listened to Him in silence.

Jesus, by the power of His Divinity, is holding back those who would advance upon Him. When the appointed time comes, He will offer Himself for sacrifice. The order for His capture must come from Him. He will give it soon, and thus shall the prophecy be fulfilled: 'He is offered because He willed it'—*Oblatus est, quia ipse voluit* (Isa. liii. 7).

And now the hour has come, and Jesus lets them know it is so by saying: *Hæc est hora vestra* ('This is your hour'). 'It has come, and I will not delay it by a single instant. *Now* I allow you to seize Me, and do what you will with My Sacred Body. This is the hour fixed by the justice of My Father, which you have longed for with so much malice and impatience.

Here am I, at your mercy.' *Hæc est hora vestra.*

At these words of Our Saviour His enemies feel, as it were, rejuvenated. All their members regain their former vigour, the hatred of their hearts burns yet more vehemently, they feel strong and free, and here is their work before them. All the men, motionless till now, move again; the extinguished torches are relighted; each one grasps his sword or club, and all rush towards Jesus, each seeking to be the first to lay hands on Him.

A servant of the High Priest, called Malchus, stronger and more agile than the others, is the first to seize Jesus. At this dreadful moment can no one be found who will defend Jesus? Until now all the Apostles, who followed Our Saviour, have remained quiet; but now, seeing their Master in imminent danger, they can no longer refrain from joining in. Peter, the most impetuous among them, raises his sword, and strikes Malchus on the head, hoping to kill him with a single blow, but instead he cuts off the right ear of the servant (St. John xviii. 10). Now would be the time for the soldiers to turn on the eleven Apostles and disperse them; but we do not fear for them, for Jesus has charged His enemies not to harm them, and no man dares lift a finger against them.

But Our Saviour does not approve of His Apostle's zeal. 'Suffer ye thus far' (*Sinite usque*

huc) (St. Luke xxii. 51). Then He adds in a calm and impassible tone: 'The chalice which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?' —*Calicem quem dedit mihi Pater, non bibam illum?* (St. John xviii. 11). 'Did I need any-one to defend Me, could I not call down My legions from Heaven? But that which was predicted of Me must be accomplished, and I will render Myself willingly into the hands of My enemies.'

Thus does Jesus in His Divine power arrest the impetuosity of the crowd, who long to throw themselves upon their prey. At the same time, as a manifestation of His Divine Goodness, He touches the ear of Malchus which Peter's sword has cut off, and restores it to its place. The cure is instantaneous and complete.

Jesus Christ, who by the sound of His voice had caused His enemies to fall to the ground, could equally have healed Malchus's ear by speaking a word. Or He could have done so by a mere act of His will, without having recourse to any outward act. He desired, however, to cure the wound by the touch of *His own Hand*. 'This shows us,' says St. Ambrose, 'that He who to-day cures one part of the human body is the same God who formerly made the entire body of man, forming it out of a little slime, and drawing it from nothingness by the power of His Arm. In the cure of Malchus,' adds the same holy Doctor, 'the slime of which man's

body is made recognised its former Author, its Creator.'

Thus, to whatever side we turn in considering Jesus Christ before His enemies, we discover always and everywhere the action of His Divinity. When we see Him humiliated, become the plaything of cruel, barbarous men, who load Him with every species of opprobrium and insult, even to making Him die upon the Cross, we can never forget that He is the strong God, and that He has willingly offered Himself to suffer all these pains and ignominies for the redemption of man.

ACT OF REPARATION.

O Divine Jesus! I acknowledge Thee to be *Divine*, for surely Thou art worthy of this title. Truly Thou art our God, and Divinity resides within Thee as in its Home. When I see Thee firm, sweet, and calm before Thy enemies, who have come to seize Thee; when I see Thee, without defence, overthrowing this multitude of sinners, who, well armed, are burning with rage and hatred against Thee; when I see that, in order to cast them to the ground, Thou dost not need the ministry of Thy angels, the assistance of Thy friends, or even the strength of Thy arms, but only speakest two words, with calm and unchanging majesty; when I see Thee alone, standing before Thy enemies, who are prostrate on the

ground, Thou seemest to me as radiant as though Thou wast surrounded by the heavenly host, and from my inmost heart I must exclaim : 'Truly Thou art my God.' Men sought in Thee only a Man, to be sacrificed to their hatred, but they found in Thee a Man-God, who disarmed them by the sound of His Voice, and struck them to the earth by the power of His words.

I adore Thee, O my Divine Jesus ! I unite my adorations with those that are rendered Thee by the blessed in Heaven, and I offer them to Thee in reparation for the insults offered Thee by those who came to seize Thee in the Garden of Olives. I offer them to Thee also in reparation for all the outrages committed against Thee each day by unhappy Christians, who are plunged in vice, and have become the prey of demons and of their own passions.

I offer Thee these adorations in reparation for the awful insults Thou dost suffer from those who deny Thy Divinity, and blaspheme it as even the devil himself dare not do, convinced as he is of Thy Godhead, before which he trembles. Mayest Thou be eternally praised, O Divine Jesus—praised by the just on earth to the end of time, praised by the blessed in Heaven for all eternity.

And thou, O Mary, who wast worthy to be the Mother of the God made Man, do thou praise Him in a special manner, with the intention of making reparation by your praise for all the

blasphemies uttered on earth by depraved and sinful men, who are victims of sin and the devil. Praise Him with the intention of gaining for them the grace of conversion, of which they have made themselves so unworthy, but which Thy Divine Son merited for them in delivering Himself willingly into the hands of His enemies that they might lead Him to His death.

CHAPTER V

JESUS BEFORE CAIPHAS. IN WHAT MANNER HIS DIVINITY SHINES FORTH

THE distance from the Garden of Olives to Calvary is not great, but at each step of the way Our Divine Saviour meets with an ocean of sufferings and ignominies sufficient to crush Him and make Him, indeed, the 'Man of Sorrows' spoken of by the prophets. All the time He is in the hands of His eager enemies He feels Divine Justice ready to expend on Him, innocence itself, the anger merited by guilty men, in whose place He is willingly suffering.

He delivers Himself into the hands of His enemies, blind instruments of this terrible Divine Justice. He knows these men will drag Him through Jerusalem from one tribunal to another, and finally lead Him to Calvary and crucify Him. Let us watch Our Divine Saviour in His journey of pain, and see how, in the midst of all His humiliations and sufferings, He gives us proofs of His Divinity. Let us now consider Him before Caiphas.

After saying to His enemies, 'This is your

hour'—having just cured the ear of Malchus—Jesus gives Himself up into their hands. Like fierce executioners, they fall on Him in savage joy, exclaiming, as it were : 'Let us devour Him. This is the day which we looked for.'

When the Apostles see that Our Saviour has been taken they are frightened, and all run away. Jesus is alone, in the power of His enemies. 'Be not surprised,' says St. Jerome, 'to see Jesus going *alone* to the place of sacrifice. *Alone* did He pray in the Garden for the salvation of men, *alone* did He struggle with Divine Justice, and *alone* will He go to offer the sacrifice for man's redemption.' He has foretold it of Himself by the mouth of the prophet : *Torcular calcavi solus, et de gentibus non est vir mecum* (Isa. lxiii. 3). *Alone*, then, He is dragged a prisoner to Jerusalem, goaded on by insults and derision.

These madmen conduct Him first to Annas, a proud, avaricious man, sensual and cruel, in order that he may have the diabolical pleasure of rejoicing over the sight of Jesus captured and bound.

Here Our Saviour undergoes His first questioning. He is asked regarding His doctrine and disciples, and He receives a blow on His Face from a servant. He is then taken to Caiphas, who is High Priest, and who is no better than his father-in-law Annas.

In the hall of Caiphas the Council is assembled

—the priests, the doctors of the laws, Scribes and Ancients—all who have conspired against Jesus. Wishing to give some appearance of justice and legality to the proceedings and to the sentence they were determined to pass against Our Saviour, these vile hypocrites sought to bring witnesses against Him. Having failed to find any honest man to testify against Him, they bring forward false witnesses.

No one could fail to see that the testimony brought forward by these perjurers was futile and contradictory, and therefore carried no weight. Is this at all surprising? For who could truly allege wrong of Him who was sinlessness itself? Jesus might here have again said: 'The prince of this world, the prince of darkness, hath not anything in Me' — *Venit princeps mundi hujus, et in Me non habet quidquam* (St. John xiv. 30).

This is Jesus, Eternal Holiness, to whom the words of the mother of Samuel must be applied: 'There is none holy as the Lord is' — *Non est sanctus ut est Dominus* (1 Kings ii. 2). This is Jesus, to whom the Church exclaims in her sublime song of praise: *Tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus.* No, no sanctity can equal the sanctity of Jesus. He *alone* is holy, He *alone* is Lord, He *alone* is the Most High. How, then, can men find a fault in Him whom Hell itself must declare to be sinless?

However, they are determined to condemn Jesus at any price. They now bring forward new witnesses, even less reliable than the preceding ones -- *Novissime venerunt duo falsi testes* (St. Matt. xxvi. 60). These new witnesses declare that they heard Jesus say: 'I can destroy the temple of God, and after three days rebuild it.'

This statement sounds plausible, but it proves nothing against Jesus. On the contrary, properly taken, it is an establishment of His Divinity. Our Saviour had spoken several times of 'the destruction of the Temple,' but the Evangelists tell us that these words apply to the temple of His Body, and not to the Temple of Jerusalem.

And, again, Jesus had *not* said: 'I can destroy this temple, and *rebuild* it in three days.' He said, speaking of His Body: *Solvite templum hoc, et in tribus diebus excitabo illud* (St. John ii. 19). That is to say, 'Make this Body die, which is the Temple of My Divinity, and in three days I will restore it to life.' He did not speak of *destruction* nor of *rebuilding*, but of *Death* and *Resurrection*. He spoke a prophecy, and predicted a miracle—the miracle of His Resurrection. Now these men contort these words to suit themselves, and use His own prophecy wherewith to incriminate Him. But, foolish men! you are but making use of a means that Jesus Christ has placed in your hands to prove His Divinity. It is three years since He made

that prophecy, which is now about to be accomplished.

Caiphas has gained nothing by the testimony he has brought against Jesus. Finding himself thus disconcerted, he seeks to trap Jesus in His speech, in order that he may condemn Him from His own words.

The High Priest addresses himself now to Jesus, and adjures Him, in the Name of the Living God, to tell them if He be the Son of God —*Adjuro te, per Deum vivum, ut dicas nobis, si tu es Christus Filius Dei benedicti* (St. Matt. xxvi., St. Mark x. 61). 'But, O Caiphas, hast thou then some doubt about the Divinity of Jesus? For to doubt it is the work of the devil' (Origen, Tract 35, 'In Matt.'). It was because he had a similar doubt that Satan questioned Our Saviour in the desert as to whether He was the Son of God or not.

If, on the other hand, Caiphas did not doubt, why did he ask the question? The reason is clear—this question of Caiphas's betrays the malice of his perverse heart, and it is only the forerunner of the black calumny he is about to utter. The devil in the desert twice asked Jesus if He was the Son of God, and he asked because he sincerely wished to be enlightened on this point. But here Caiphas is worse than Satan himself. He asks Jesus if He is the Son of God solely for the sake of caluminating Him, and condemning Him by His own answer. As the

Venerable Bede says: *Non veritatem desiderabat, sed calumniam præparabat.*

If in answer to his question Jesus denies that He is the Son of God, Caiphas is ready to accuse Him of a lie, knowing that Our Saviour has declared Himself to be the Son of God. If Jesus again admits that He is the Son of God, the High Priest will accuse Him of blasphemy. But Jesus sees into the malicious heart of Caiphas. He knows its craft and cunning. What answer does He make? He acknowledges again that He is God in saying to Caiphas: *Tu dixisti* ('Thou hast said it'). As though He would say: 'It is as you have said. With your own mouth you have confessed that I am the Son of God.' He does not hesitate. He is not afraid to own, fettered and bound as He is, that He is the Son of God, who will one day summon them all before His judgment-seat, and will show them in very truth that He is the Judge of the living and the dead — *Verumtamen dico vobis, amodo videbitis Filium hominis sedentem a dextris virtutis Dei, et venientem in nubibus cœli* (St. Matt. xxvi. 64).

But Caiphas, that proud Pontiff of the synagogue, will not heed these truths. Through an infernal hypocrisy worthy of him, he affects a pious indignation on hearing these words of Jesus. Pretending to be profoundly shocked, he rises and stands in the middle of the Council. He rends his garments in the presence of them all,

and cries: 'He hath blasphemed. What need have we of further testimony?'—*Tunc princeps sacerdotum scidit vestimenta sua, dicens: Blasphemavit, quid adhuc egemus testibus? Ecce nunc audistis blasphemiam* (St. Matt. xxvi. 65).

Unhappy Caiphas! In accusing Jesus of blasphemy, it is *you* who have blasphemed. In rending your priestly robes before all Israel, and in the presence of Jesus, you have but commenced the accomplishment of a terrible calamity that will fall on your entire nation. In rending the garments of his priestly office in hatred of the Divine Filiation of Jesus, what has he done? Without doubt he has but cleared the way for the new priesthood—the Order of Melchisedech, of which Jesus is the Eternal High Priest.

Blind Caiphas! Wait yet a little while. When in a few hours you see the veil of the temple rent from the top even to the bottom at the death of this same Jesus whom you now accuse, and whose Divinity you insult, then will be the consummation of the terrible tragedy that has now commenced. This Jesus, Son of God, who is before you, uses your own hands to despoil you of your priesthood, in order that He may replace it by His own, which will never have an end. This is what St. Leo remarks in those memorable words: *Ipse* (*Caiphas*) *se spoliat et propriis manibus pontificalia indumenta discerpens, ipse sibi est sui executor opprobrii* (Serm. 4, 'In Pass.').

Caiphas then looks at those around him for support of what he has said to Jesus. After saying Jesus has blasphemed, he asks the assembly: 'What think you?' (St. Matt. xxvi. 66). They answer: 'He is guilty of death' (*Reus est mortis*). Jesus is guilty of death. Thus terminates the first judgment of Jesus before the High Priest Caiphas.

But what is this you say, O perfidious Jews? The innocent Jesus of Nazareth must die because He has confessed that He is truly the Son of God? Yes, truly, *He will die;* but know you that in dying He will turn His death into a victory, for by His death He will redeem mankind. *He will die*, but He will reject your nation, till you have no longer home or temple, sacrifice or priesthood. *He will die*, but in dying He will found His Church. *He will die*, not because He deserves death, but only because He has desired to die and give His life for the salvation of all men. *He will die*, but in dying He will darken your eyes and the eyes of your children, until your nation is blind to the Messias, and cannot recognise Him who has been promised by the prophets. *He will die*, but in dying He will prove that He is God.

After this unjust decision, Caiphas and the other judges retire to take a few hours' rest, firmly decided to meet again at break of day and conclude this matter, as to the issue of which there seemed but little doubt.

Meanwhile, Jesus is handed over to the care of the soldiers and servants of the High Priest. Did they content themselves with simply guarding Him? Far from it; they spent the whole night lavishing on Him all manner of outrages and insults. What the Evangelists tell us makes us shudder with horror, and they have only told us a little of what Jesus underwent. 'No creature in the world,' says St. Bonaventure, 'however vile, has ever been treated so shamefully as was Jesus in the house of Caiphas.' Mockeries, buffets, blows, spittle—all are employed to treat Jesus as though He was the lowest among men. But this treatment of Him has also been predicted by the prophets. They beheld these indignities among those punishments which the Saviour of mankind took upon Himself when He became the willing Victim for the sins of men.

Jesus Himself had told His Apostles of the insults He would suffer. 'Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man. For He shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and He shall be mocked and scourged and spit upon, and after they have scourged Him they will put Him to death' (St. Luke xviii. 31-33).

Thus were these ignominies foretold by the prophets and by Jesus Himself. He had foreseen them in His Agony in the Garden, and had willingly accepted them for love of man, for

whom He was about to die. Insulted, derided, mocked, as we see Him, covered with disgrace and opprobrium, we cry out from our hearts that Jesus is God, that He is the Messias, the Man-God.

Being, in our stead, under the sword of God's avenging justice, it was fitting that Jesus should descend to the lowest depths in the abyss of ignominy, in order that we, sinners and criminals, might mount up to the throne of His Divinity in Heaven.

It was permitted that the Adorable Face of Jesus should be covered for a time with blows and filthy spittle, that we, proud and guilty, might one day gaze on Its infinite Beauty. Poor fallen humanity was revealed in the last degree of abasement, and Divine Justice was unswerving in the pitilessness of Its blows. The God-Man put Himself in our place to ward off from us these blows, and for this end He must descend to the lowest abyss of misery and humiliation, and in spite of His innocence He must Himself receive the scourges of God's anger before He can draw mankind forth from the awful gulf in which they are plunged.

By these profound abasements Jesus shows us that He is truly the Good Shepherd of the human race, who goes forth to seek His lost sheep where they have fallen, paying no attention to the mire that will soil Him, or the brambles that will tear and scratch Him, or the dangerous gulf that will

threaten Him. It is sufficient for His loving Heart that at the bottom of that dread precipice His afflicted ones are groaning, wounded and in distress. He forgets Himself, as it were, and descends even to the lowest depths to rescue them from eternal death. Oh! see, this Good Shepherd, this Divine Shepherd, is no other than Jesus Christ. His humiliations in the house of Caiphas only show forth more clearly His Divinity.

And yet these innumerable insults and humiliations that Our Saviour suffers in the house of Caiphas are only the commencement of His Passion. He will yet suffer far more before His love is satiated.

In His Incarnation He appeared *under the form of man*. In His humiliations and ignominy in the house of Caiphas He appears *under the form of a slave*, and yet He must suffer still more insults, undergo more suffering, before He dies on Calvary. When He is on Calvary He will be like unto the *lowest of slaves*, but through it all He will show Himself to be God. Indeed, when at last He is raised on the cross, nailed to the infamous gibbet of shame, His Divinity will shine forth with overwhelming and dazzling splendour.

These insults and this disgrace which He suffers in the house of Caiphas can in no way injure His Divinity. It is a glory to Him to have loved man so much in order to save him. It is glorious for Him to have so 'emptied Him-

self, taking the form of a servant' (Phil. ii. 7), and have died like a slave upon the cross, for love of man. The Apostle adds: 'For which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a Name which is above all names, that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father' (Phil. ii. 9-11).

The truly faithful servants of God will not be scandalized by these humiliations heaped upon Jesus, because they know full well that this Jesus whom they see despised and insulted is really and truly God.

This terrible night, so overladen with pain for Jesus, at length comes to an end. Morning dawns, and day begins—that day which will be the last in the mortal life of Jesus.

At an early hour the Sanhedrim assemble in the house of Caiphas to ratify the sentence passed on Jesus the preceding night. All the chiefs of the Jewish nation are there—Scribes and Pharisees, Priests and Ancients, all hasten to pronounce again the sentence of death on Our Saviour. In his turn the High Priest also arrives, and once more Jesus is brought before him. This time the examination is not long. Witnesses are called, and the High Priest himself questions Jesus: 'If Thou be the Christ, tell us' (St. Luke xxij. 66).

Here Jesus surprises them all by His answer. The answer He gives Caiphas is altogether Divine. He first shows His Divinity by penetrating the heart of this hypocrite. He then reminds him that He will one day judge him, and concludes by again acknowledging that He is truly the Son of God.

In His Omniscience, piercing the dark depths of Caiphas's heart, and seeing there his black designs and bad intentions hidden under his suave manner, He answers him : 'If I shall tell you, you will not believe Me, and if I shall also ask you, you will not answer Me, nor let Me go. But hereafter the Son of Man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God.' They ask Him then : 'Art Thou then the Son of God?' and Jesus answers : 'You say that I am'—*Vos dicitis quia Ego sum* (St. Luke xxii. 67-70).

By this Jesus would show Caiphas and the others who listen to Him that even if they do not believe Him to be God, He will yet not cease to be so in very truth. He also reminds them that, although now they see Him before them the victim of their hatred, one day they in turn will stand before His judgment-seat to be judged without mercy.

Then they say : 'What need we any further testimony? For we ourselves have heard it from His own Mouth' (St. Luke xxii. 71).

See how deeply Jesus has been steeped in humiliation in the house of Caiphas, and see

also how His Divinity has shone forth. 'He merits most homage from men when He suffers most indignities for love of men,' says Tertullian (*Tanto magis ab hominibus honorandus quando magis pro hominibus indigna suscepit*).

ACT OF REPARATION.

How sublime Thou art, O Divine Jesus, even in the midst of Thy humiliations! Yea, even in Thy lowest degradations Thy Divinity shines forth. The more I see Thee humbled by the proud High Priest Caiphas, the more I admire Thy patience and worship Thy Divinity, which descended even thus far for the salvation of poor fallen man. In all Thy humiliations, O Jesus, Thou didst but obey the promptings of Thy love. In all Thy sufferings Thou didst execute the designs of Thy Divine Providence, and fulfil all the prophecies concerning the 'Man of Sorrows.'

Thy torturers may heap insults upon Thee, and make Thee appear as the lowest among men. They may publicly insult Thee, spit on Thee, and malign Thee. They may bring false witnesses against Thee, and blacken Thy reputation. To all this Thou canst in very truth answer that 'the prince of this world has not anything in Thee' (St. John xiv. 30). All that is in Thee is holy. Thou art all innocent, all pure. Thou art Sanctity itself, for Thou art God of Heaven and earth.

I confess to Thy Divinity, O Jesus, before angels and men, and by this profession of faith I desire to render Thee as much honour as those blasphemous men who deny Thy Divinity dishonour Thee.

Unite thyself to me, I beseech thee, O holy Virgin-Mother of my Saviour Jesus Christ. Thou art the worthy Mother of the God made Man. In an especial manner thou didst behold His Divinity during His mortal life, and thou canst honour Him more than all creatures together. Glorify His Divinity with me, or rather permit me to join my praises to thine, in order that the reparation I would pay the wounded Heart of thy Son may be more efficacious, and that He may be consoled for all the insults offered to Him by blasphemous unbelievers.

CHAPTER VI

JESUS BEFORE PILATE FOR THE FIRST TIME. HOW HIS DIVINITY SHINES FORTH

MAN sins and God judges. Indeed, hardly had the first man transgressed for the first time than God came to him to judge him. He asked him, 'Adam, where are thou?' (Gen. iii. 9), and afterwards immediately passed judgment on him and his descendants. The judgment of God, then, necessarily follows on the sin of man.

Jesus Christ, having put on the exterior appearance of a sinner in order to redeem man, must therefore also suffer to be judged. He cannot be judged by His Father, to whom He is equal in nature and authority, but He must be judged instead by men. This, then, is the reason why we find Him before the tribunals in Jerusalem.

The Eternal Father required a victim, holy and without stain, that should be offered for the sins of men. This victim is no other than Jesus, the Man-God, Son of God, who willingly put Himself in our place in order to accomplish this reconciliation. But before He can be immolated as the

Victim, He must be judged before man's tribunal and condemned as the most guilty of men, thus representing the real and universal guilt of the children of Adam.

We have watched Jesus before Caiphas, and we found that He was God, equal to the Father. Let us now accompany Him to the tribunal of Pilate, and see how, amid new humiliations, His Divinity still shines forth.

The trial of Our Divine Saviour began by the accusations made against Him in the house of Caiphas by the false witnesses. There the Scribes and Pharisees, the doctors of the law, the priests, and Caiphas have all played the part of 'judge.' They declared that Our Saviour was worthy of death because He called Himself the Son of God. Now these same men are acting as 'accusers.' They play this part before Pilate and Herod, and they will continue it until their hatred against Jesus is completely satiated when they see Him dying on the cross.

They have declared Him worthy of death, but they have not the power to put Him to death, and in any case they do not want to be recognised as the authors of His death for fear of incensing the people, who, in spite of all their efforts, are still attached to Jesus. They wish Him to die, but at the same time they wish the final condemnation to death to be pronounced by Pilate, so that all the censure may fall on him.

For the execution of this plan it would have

been sufficient for them to have sent Jesus, well guarded, to Pilate, despatching at the same time their accusation against Him, leaving the case to be decided according to the law. On their part, they might now have retired from the scene and kept quiet, trusting to the equity and honesty of the Roman Governor. But so great is the hatred of these men for Jesus that the Evangelists tell us that as soon as it was morning all—Scribes and Pharisees, doctors of the law and priests rise up and lead Him to Pilate—*Surgens omnis multitudo eorum* (St. Luke xxiii. 1), *summi sacerdotes cum senioribus et universo concilio* (St. Mark xv. 1), *adducunt Jesum a Caipha in Prætorium* (St. John xviii. 28).

'They take these measures,' observes St. Leo (Serm. 8, De Pass.), 'to overawe the Roman Governor, and to assure him by their presence and their representations that it is really the desire of the nation that Jesus should die, and that He should not be let go on any account.'

Having arrived at the Prætorium, the hypocrites remain at the entrance. They say that they fear to enter the house of Pilate, lest they should be defiled by entering the house of an unbeliever on the day when they celebrated their Pasch. Therefore they remain outside, whilst Jesus, well guarded, is taken into the Prætorium. Seeing that they do not enter, Pilate takes the trouble to go out to them, and begins to speak to them concerning Jesus. 'You bring me a Man

who, judging by His chains and fetters, is guilty. Surely you have not brought Him here without having any accusations against him. Where then, are your accusations?' — *Quam accusationem affertis adversus hominem hunc?* (St. John xviii. 29). This question of Pilate's disconcerts the Jewish magistrates. The impious traitors did not expect it; they thought that their importunity would be sufficient to make Pilate condemn Jesus. In their confusion and embarrassment they can only answer him: 'If He were not a malefactor we would not have delivered Him up to thee' (John xviii. 30). 'These are only words,' says Pilate. 'I want your evidence. If you have not any to show, take Him and judge Him according to your law.' The Jews say: 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death' (St. John xviii. 31). The preceding night the perfidious Jews had found Jesus worthy of death because, they said, He had blasphemed. Why, then, do they not tell this to Pilate? Because they well know that this accusation, false in itself, will carry no weight with the Roman Governor, who does not trouble himself on points of their religion. What reasons, then, can they give for wishing Jesus to be condemned to death? They say: 'We have found this Man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that He is Christ the King' (Luke xxiii. 2). Here we have three quite new accusations brought against Jesus, and nothing

could be more false than these are, for the whole life of Our Saviour is a denial of them.

However, these accusations are quite sufficient to rouse the jealousy of a man of the rank of Pilate, although at the same time he could see from their excited manner that it was through envy and hatred of Jesus that they had brought Him to be condemned to death. Whilst this conversation is being held outside the Prætorium, Jesus, who is inside, is well guarded, and, naturally speaking, cannot hear a word of what has passed. Pilate, wishing to please the Jews, leaves them, and goes inside the palace and orders Jesus to be brought before him — *Introivit in Prætorium et vocavit Jesum* (St. John xviii. 33).

Of the three accusations that the Jews have brought against Jesus, only one seems to have made any impression on Pilate—that which concerned the royalty of Jesus; as to the others, he passes them over, knowing them to be false and trivial. He says to Jesus: 'Art Thou the King of the Jews?'—*Tu es Rex Judæorum?* (St. John xviii. 33). Pilate thought that thus he could make Jesus declare to him His secret thoughts; but Jesus, on the contrary, shows by His answer that He knows all that has passed outside between the Jews and the Roman governor—*A temitipso hoc dicis: an alii dixerunt tibi de Me?*—'Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of Me?' (St. John xviii. 34). In his confusion

Pilate answers evasively: 'Am I a Jew? Thy own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee up to me. What hast Thou done?' (St. John xviii. 35). Jesus does not hesitate to answer Pilate. Pilate has asked Our Saviour if He is a King. 'My kingdom is not of this world,' answers Jesus. 'If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews' (St. John xviii. 36). We see that by this answer Our Saviour, while acknowledging His royalty, testifies at the same time to His Divinity.

'*My kingdom is not of this world.*' In declaring that His kingdom is not of this world He says that He is King, but He means at the same time that He is not King in the same way that others are kings—of this world. He means He is King, but His kingdom is not a profane kingdom, governed by diplomacy and human policy. He means that His kingdom is not a political, but a religious kingdom; that it is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly one; that it is not a kingdom limited by frontiers, but vast as the world itself; that it is not temporal, but eternal; that it is not human, but Divine. By His kingdom He means His Church, His holy religion. He means that He is King of that vast monarchy, spiritual and heavenly, and that it is His Heavenly Father who has constituted Him King on the holy mountain of which the foundations extend from the east to the west, from the north to the south.

Ego autem constitutus sum Rex ab eo super Sion montem sanctum ejus (Ps. ii. 6). He means that He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He means that He is King, and that His kingdom will last for all ages; He means He is King of the hearts and consciences of men, that He penetrates their depths, that nothing hidden escapes Him, and that He knows how to reward those who merit reward and how to punish those who deserve punishment; He means that He is King, but in every sense different from earthly kings, and His kingdom differs from theirs in its foundation, its methods, its ends, its rewards, its punishments, its empire, and its duration. *Regnum meum non est de hoc mundo.* He means, then, He is King and God. 'He teaches Pilate,' says Theophylacte ('In Joan.'), 'that He may know that He is not only a Man, but a God also.' Yes; Jesus Christ is King and God. 'His kingdom,' says the Abbot Rupert ('In Joan.,' lib. xiii.), 'consists in giving sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, in curing the lame, in raising the dead, in preaching to the poor, and in allowing Himself to be taken and bound as a thief for the salvation of men—outraged, derided, and spat upon.'

Pilate is surprised and astounded by this answer of Our Divine Saviour, and not being able to hide his astonishment, he says to Him: *Ergo Rex es tu?* 'Art Thou a King, then?' (St. John xviii. 37). Jesus answers gently: 'Thou sayest that I am a King. For this was I born, and for

this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the Truth' (St. John xviii. 37).

In saying 'I came into the world' after having said that He was King, and that His kingdom was not of this world, He clearly points out that He existed before His mortal birth, before coming into the world, in the form of Man, and that, by His Divinity, He existed before Abraham, although He was the Son of Abraham, according to the flesh. He tells Pilate He came into the world to give testimony to the Truth. What is this Truth to which He came to bear testimony? St. Augustine says: 'This Truth is Jesus Christ Himself' (Tract 115, 'In Joan.,' n. 4). He has already said of Himself as God: *Ego sum Veritas* ('*I am Truth*'). He says now that He is come to bear testimony to the Truth—that is to say, He is come to reveal Himself because only the Son of God made Man could palpably reveal to us the great mystery of the Divine Filiation. Pilate had Truth before him, in the person of Jesus, but, plunged in the darkness of paganism, he could not recognise It. Scarcely has he courage to say to Our Saviour, 'What is Truth?' (*Quid est Veritas?*) and without waiting for an answer, he returns to the Jewish multitude outside.

By this interview that Pilate has alone with Jesus, he sees full well that Our Saviour is innocent, and that His kingdom is not one that can injure the Jews because it is not an earthly

kingdom. Therefore, without hesitation, he faces the whole Jewish throng, and says to them with conviction: 'I find no cause in Him'—*Ego nullam invenio in eo causam* (St. John xviii. 38). It is as though he said to them, 'You are base calumniators.' Stung to the quick by this decision of Pilate, the chief priests bring forth fresh accusations against Jesus—*Et accusabant eum summi sacerdotes in multis* (St. Mark xv. 3).

Then Pilate begins to waver. He could say to the Jews: 'Here is Jesus; I find no cause in Him. I give Him into your hands again. I cannot condemn Him.' But instead of speaking thus Pilate hesitates and listens to the Jews, even as Eve amused herself by listening to the serpent, and, like her, he grows weaker, and Jesus is the victim of his weakness, even as He is the victim of the calumnies of His accusers.

The Roman Governor hears the new accusations brought against Jesus, and as he feels himself unequal to cope with them, he calls on the poor Culprit to answer them. He turns to Jesus, and says to Him: 'Answerest Thou nothing? Behold in how many things they accuse Thee' (St. Mark xv. 4).

The Evangelists tell us that Our Saviour answered nothing—*Et non respondit ei ullum verbum*. Presently, when He is called upon to defend His Father's honour, He will give an answer. Now, when the question concerns His

own deliverance or condemnation, He will not open His Mouth.

How expressive is this silence of Jesus! Pilate himself, pagan as he is, feels its influence. Instead of being angered by it, this silence on the part of Our Saviour excites his admiration, and the Evangelist tells us 'he wondered exceedingly' (St. Matt. xxvii. 14).

'It is by this silence that Pilate discerns the calumnies of the accusers and the innocence of the accused,' says St. Athanasius ('De Passione Dom.'); and Origen remarks: 'No man has ever been seen who, under the weight of a mortal accusation and in the face of a cruel and ignominious death, has kept silence in so brave a manner, with so serene and calm a countenance, and such majestic dignity.' This it is that causes Pilate to wonder exceedingly, and forces his admiration. From this moment he seeks a means to release Jesus, as we shall see presently.

Meanwhile, let us also admire this silence of Our Divine Saviour, for it is a silence all Divine. It is the silence of the Lamb of God, who is going to be sacrificed without opening His Mouth, as the prophet foretold; it is the silence of the Son of God.

By this silence, so calm and majestic, better than by any words, Jesus preaches at the same time His innocence and His Divinity, and He triumphs over His accusers.

ACT OF REPARATION

O my Divine Lord! Thou hast no need to answer Pilate again after Thou hast told him that Thou art King, and that Thy kingdom is not of this world. Yes, my Jesus, be silent, and whilst Thou art silent I will cast myself at Thy Feet, and say to Thee with all the love of my contrite heart: 'My sweet Jesus, Thou art King, but Thy kingdom is founded on different principles from the earthly kingdoms around me. Earthly kings are wavering and uncertain—Thou alone art unchanging and unchangeable. Thou governest these kings, but no man governs Thee. Yea, Thou art truly a King, but Thy Empire is not restricted or confined—Thou rulest heaven and earth. Thou art indeed a King, but Thy Royalty knows no limit, for Thou art Eternal. And all this proves that Thou art not only a King, but a King-God.'

Come, ye angels of Heaven; come, ye just on earth; all you who adore this King of kings, come and offer Him your homage. Come forth from the infernal abysses, O unhappy spirits, and in your turn prostrate yourselves at the Feet of this King, for He is your King also, and there is no King like to Him.

O Divine Saviour, wretched and unworthy as I am, I adore Thy infinite Royalty in spirit and in truth, and I offer Thee the adorations of all Thy creatures in expiation for the awful blasphemies

of those who, unlike the angels in heaven, or just on earth, and worse even than the damned in hell, dare to deny Thy Divinity.

If Thou willest, O Lord, that to expiate so great a crime I should give my life and my heart's blood, I am ready, and I should be but too happy thus to make reparation in the smallest degree for the outrages Thou receivest from unbelieving men.

But I have something yet more precious to offer Thee in expiation for all these terrible blasphemies. I offer Thee all the merits of Thy most sorrowful Passion, and to Thine own merits I join those of her whom Thou didst choose for Thy Mother—Mary, who loves Thee more than all creatures together. O grant that the merits of Thy Sacred Passion, and the merits of Mary Thy Immaculate Mother, may appease the justice of Thy Father, which is roused against us, and grant also that they may obtain the grace of conversion for all poor sinners who blaspheme Thy holy Name.

CHAPTER VII

JESUS CHRIST BEFORE HEROD. HOW HIS DIVINITY REVEALS ITSELF

ALTHOUGH the silence of Jesus excited the admiration of Pilate, he realized that his weakness of character prevented him from holding out against the malicious importunity of the Jews. He considered now what stratagem he could find and make use of to extricate himself from this embarrassment.

Without intending to help him, the Jews themselves furnished the means he sought. In their vile and untrue accusations against Jesus, they had declared that Our Saviour 'stirred up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee, to this place' (St. Luke xxiii. 5). Herod was then ruling over the province of Galilee. On hearing the word 'Galilee,' Pilate got the idea of sending Jesus to Herod, who was now in Jerusalem for the celebration of the Pasch, and he now proceeded to act on his sudden inspiration — *Pilatus remiset eum ad Herodem* (St. Luke xxiii. 7).

We will now follow Jesus to the tribunal of

Herod, and see in what manner His Divinity manifests Itself. The tribunal of Herod is the fourth before which Jesus has been brought since He has been in the hands of His enemies. He was led first before Annas, then before Caiphas, after that He was taken to Pilate, and now Pilate sends Him to Herod. Herod was a noted profligate, a monster of crime. He is the representative of sensuality and depravity.

This detestable man had long desired to see Jesus, of whose miracles he had so often heard, but he never had the courage to send for Him or to go and see Him. He is therefore delighted now the opportunity has arrived of his meeting Our Saviour, and he hopes that, having worked so many miracles for others, Jesus will work some now at his command.

Jesus is led before Herod. Herod is surrounded by his Court, and Jesus stands before him, in the midst of the soldiers, the chief priests, Scribes and Pharisees, who have all accompanied Him, in order to add to His confusion, and, if necessary, to renew their calumnies against Him. Herod is, naturally, the first to speak. He turns to Jesus, in order to question Him, but he does not refer to the reason why Our Saviour is brought before him. He makes a number of other remarks, and asks many curious questions—no doubt as to His parents and home, His disciples and their number, His doctrine and those who have listened to it, His miracles, His ambitions, for the Evangelist

tells us 'he questioned Him in many words' (St. Luke xxiii. 9). He even flattered Him, and coaxed Him to tell him about Himself, hoping that thus he could persuade Our Saviour to work some miracles before him. But after all this coaxing and questioning on the part of Herod, what did Jesus do? He answers nothing. Jesus will not reply. He will not even glance at his sinful examiner, but maintains a cold, determined silence, and stands before him motionless and silent as a statue.

Ah, Herod! you desire Jesus to work a miracle for you, but what miracle can He work for such as you and your followers? Would you have Him give sight to the blind or hearing to the deaf? Would you that He should cure the sick or raise the dead? He has already repeatedly worked these miracles of *mercy* when He was free, and went about through all the land doing good to all. But now that He is a prisoner and laden with chains, now that He has been heartlessly forsaken and abandoned, He does not heal the sick or raise the dead. He is now before a licentious and pagan prince, and surrounded by a wicked Court. He will here work miracles of another kind—the miracles of *justice*.

The greatest of these miracles of justice is *not* to call down lightning to consume the sinner, or to command the earth to open and swallow him up. The most terrifying of all is for Jesus *to be silent*, not to speak to the heart of the sinner, to

make no effort to raise him from his misery, but to leave him to sink lower into the gulf of his iniquities. St. Augustine tells us that it is a greater miracle of *mercy* to cure the ills of the soul than those of the body. On the other hand, then, we see Jesus performing the greatest miracle of Divine *justice* before Herod in being silent, and in refusing to offer him any signs of mercy whereby he may repent of his sins and turn back from his evil life.

This mysterious silence of Our Saviour is expressive; it speaks to Herod, as it were, and says: 'He that is filthy, let him be filthy still' (Apoc. xxii. 11).

This is the only miracle that Jesus performs before Herod—the miracle of blinding his spirit and hardening his heart—and this dreadful miracle of *justice* shows forth His Divinity as clearly as did all His former miracles of *mercy*. In this way Our Divine Saviour showed that He had power to perform all sorts of miracles, depending on the good or bad intentions and dispositions of those in whom He would work them.

Let us remark the circumstances that accompany this silence of Jesus. He is silent before a prince who questions Him; He is silent at a time when it would seem He needed to use every means in His power to defend Himself; He is silent amid the cries of His enemies, who accuse Him on all sides, and demand His death; He is silent without losing any of the calmness,

sweetness, or patience of His manner. Surely a silence such as this surpasses the ordinary power of man. An ordinary man *could* not have behaved like this. He would, at least, have said to the judge: 'I abandon my cause. I leave you to judge my innocence or my guilt.' But *Jesus is silent.* He needs no defence; He can defend Himself if He wishes to. He has given many proofs of His power, and did He not but a few hours ago terrify the whole multitude, and cause them to fall to the earth, by a single word? No, this is a silence significant of the Man-God.

Herod is covered with confusion by this silence of Jesus, but he tries to hide it as best he can. The chief priests and Scribes continue their accusations. Herod hears them, but these very accusations only add to his shame. For him Jesus Christ is only a foolish Man; he does not believe this prisoner to be God, the more so as He does not work any visible miracle, and will not even open His Mouth.

He does not believe the accusations made by the chief priests; there is too much animosity and hatred in them. His opinion is that Jesus is not guilty of the crimes of which He is accused. Thinking Our Saviour to be a fool and an imbecile, he causes Him to be clothed in a white robe, and sends Him back to Pilate.

In Pilate's house Jesus will soon be clothed in a *red* mantle; here, in Herod's house, He is clothed in a *white* robe. He is the Beloved in

the Canticle 'white and ruddy' (*Dilectus candidus et rubicundus*)—*ruddy* by His Passion and the Blood He sheds; *white* by His Divinity and His innocence.

Herod is the blind instrument chosen by God to show to the world, by this mark of derision, the Divinity and innocence of Jesus Christ. He makes use of the wickedness of man to show forth Divine wisdom as well as Divine justice. 'There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord' (Prov. xxi. 30). Learn then, O man, to know your own weakness and the power of Him who, being your God, showed forth His Divinity in so many ways, amidst sufferings and humiliations, and in the Humanity which He took for love of us. It is He who can and will save us, and if we are lost the fault will be all our own.

ACT OF REPARATION.

O my sweetest Jesus, I know it was by Thy Almighty word Thou didst create the world. Thou hast enriched Thy creatures, and shown them mercy by Thy words. Thou didst show Thy power in the Garden of Olives by casting Thy enemies to the ground at the sound of Thy Voice. Thy word cast them down, and Thy word raised them again, because Thou wouldst that on Calvary they should be converted to Thee.

With Herod, O my Divine Lord, Thou didst act otherwise. There Thou didst work a miracle without word or touch. But what a terrible miracle it was! O my Jesus! Thou didst go before Herod in order that he might see the infinitely *Just* God, and Thy justice was shown by Thy silence. It was as though Thy silence spoke to him, and said: 'Thou art not worthy to hear My Voice.'

This is the punishment those men incur who in our own day doubt and deny Thy Divinity. They merit reprobation; they do not deserve that Thou shouldst speak to their hearts, but rather that Thou shouldst leave them a prey to their guilty passions until they are dragged by them into the flames of hell. Yea, Lord, this is what they deserve, but charity forbids me to wish it. On the contrary, I beg Thee to have mercy on them.

By these humiliations which Thou didst suffer before Herod I beseech Thee to have pity on these unfortunate sinners. They are already too unfortunate in having dared to attack Thee so blindly. Speak, then, once again to their wayward hearts, show them the misery in which they lie, so that they may not at length be plunged in an abyss yet more profound.

O Mary, do thou thyself offer these humiliations to thy Divine Son. Plead for these poor blinded creatures, and obtain from the Divine Mercy the pardon of their sins.

CHAPTER VIII

JESUS BEFORE PILATE FOR THE SECOND TIME. HIS DIVINITY MANIFESTS ITSELF BEFORE THE WEAKNESS OF THE JUDGE, THE HATRED OF HIS ENEMIES, AND THE ENVY OF HELL

At the tribunal of a weak and unjust judge crime will triumph over virtue, calumny will overcome innocence. Such a judge will inevitably be wrong and unfair in his decisions, and so it was with Pilate. He recognised the calumnies of the accusers, and he could have made Him who was manifestly innocent free. He could have silenced the calumniators, saved the innocent One, and earned for himself immortal glory. But this was not his character, and on this occasion God, as He often does, made use of the passions of men to show them their foolishness and to accomplish the work of His Love—the Redemption of Mankind. Only God could act thus, for He alone can make good result from evil.

By sending Jesus to Herod Pilate thought he had rid himself of Our Saviour; therefore on seeing Him sent back, clothed as a fool, and on hearing Herod's message concerning Jesus—that

he found in Him nothing worthy of condemnation —his embarrassment increased. Not knowing what to do, and seeing before him the chief priests and the people clamouring for Our Saviour's death, Pilate said to them : 'You have presented unto me this Man as one that perverteth the people, and behold I, having examined Him before you, find no cause in this Man in those things wherein you accuse Him. No, nor Herod either. For I sent you to him, and behold nothing worthy of death is done to Him. I will chastise Him, therefore, and release Him' (St. Luke xxiii. 16).

Shameful injustice !—to chastise an innocent man ! But such was the weakness of Pilate, and lest he should repent of the sentence, they rush on Jesus at once to take Him away and scourge Him.

Meanwhile a new idea comes to Pilate, and it raises a hope in his heart that he may yet be able to save Jesus. It was the custom among the Jews to release one prisoner each year, in memory of their deliverance from captivity. There was at this time a well-known malefactor called Barabbas in prison ; he was a thief and a murderer. Pilate then turns to the Jews, and says : 'Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ ?'

The comparison is too revolting ! But Pilate in his blind weakness does not notice this. The Jews are infuriated, and all together cry out :

'Away with this Man, and release unto us Barabbas!' (Luke xxiii. 18). This is the hideous result of man giving way to his passions. Pilate continues: 'What shall I do then with Jesus that is called Christ?' (St. Matt. xxvii. 22). 'What will you then that I do to the King of the Jews?' (St. Mark xv. 12). And they cry out: 'Crucify Him! crucify Him! (St. Luke xxiii. 21). Pilate, not knowing what to do, and feeling they are too strong for him, gives way, and delivers Jesus up to their fury to be crucified. 'And having scourged Jesus, he delivered Him unto them to be crucified' (St. Matt. xxvii. 26).

The deed is terrible, but we must look yet closer to see the mystery hidden therein and the Divinity of Jesus that manifests itself.

All through His mortal life the demons were doubtful as to the Divinity of Our Saviour. On the one hand they saw Him continually working wonderful miracles which astounded them; on the other hand, they saw His poverty and His simple and ordinary manner of life, which was no different from that of other men. The infernal spirits could not reconcile these two things, which seemed to the mincompatible. Lucifer himself was puzzled as to what to believe, and he was continually changing his ideas as to the Divinity of Our Saviour. In his indecision he resembled those men of our day who, half foolish, recognise the strangeness of their ideas, and try to put them down, yet are ever recurring to them.

In the designs of Divine Providence the mystery of the Redemption was not to be manifested openly to the demons until the moment of its complete accomplishment on Calvary. Till then the demons were to be tormented by doubt. Lucifer made many efforts during the lifetime of Our Saviour to discover whether He was truly God, but he never succeeded. Even up to the time of His Sacred Passion he doubted.

If he could see Jesus now escape from His enemies he might indeed hesitate no longer in believing Him to be God ; but as he saw Our Saviour remain silent and powerless under the weight of His chains, his indecision was renewed, and he received no enlightenment on the subject that puzzled him. Once he had himself tried to tempt Jesus, but he found he had no power over Him. Not being able to act personally against Our Saviour, he now employs those over whom he has constituted himself master.

Pilate and the Jews were members of Satan, as St. Gregory says : *Diaboli membrum fuit Pilatus, diaboli membra Judæi persequentes, et militis crucifigentes* (Hom. 16, 'In Evan.'). The devil now uses them by their hatred and their weakness to try and find out the secret that is hidden from him. It is he who stimulates the hatred of these heartless men to crush Jesus under this load of suffering ; it is he who adds to the weakness of Pilate ; and yet it is he who tries to set Jesus free.

He speaks thus to himself: 'If Jesus Christ *is* the Son of God, I must try as far as I can to prevent His death, which would destroy my empire over the world. If, again, He is only *Man*, I shall discover that by increasing His sufferings till He is bound to succumb, and His death as an ordinary Man will not injure me at all.'

This crafty action of Satan is recognised by the Doctors of the Church. St. John Chrysostom tells us that it was Satan who, at the crowning with thorns, instigated the executioners to heap insults on Jesus—*Diabolus erat qui universos illos tunc occupabat, et quasi ad choræam concitabat voluptatem ex contumeliis capientes.* And St. Augustine also says that all the mockeries the Jews offered Jesus were the work of the devil. The Holy Fathers had good reason for speaking thus, because Jesus, when He gave Himself up to His enemies in the Garden, said to them: 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness,' giving us to understand that the evil spirits were not idle during the Passion.

Also, as the *hatred* which the demons had personally for Jesus was equalled only by their *fear* lest He should be God, they were forced to act sometimes to cause His death, and sometimes to try and save Him, as His death as God would destroy their power over men, which power was so dear to them.

Moved by *fear* lest Jesus should really be God,

the devil now tries to prevent His death. He knows that a criminal is released every year at the Pasch, so he prompts weak Pilate to compare Jesus with Barabbas, in order that the Jews, seeing a base criminal made equal to an innocent man, may condemn Barabbas and release Jesus. It is really Satan who speaks through the mouth of Pilate when he asks : 'Which will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called Christ ?'

And then immediately he is sorry he has taken the part of Jesus. *Fear* gives place to *hatred*. He changes his plan again, and stirs up anew all the bitter animosity in the hearts of the Jews against Our Saviour. He urges them to cry vehemently, 'Not this Man, but Barabbas!' By the words of Pilate, Satan tried to prevent the death of Jesus, lest by it his kingdom should be destroyed, and then by the loud cries of the Jews he unconsciously facilitated his own destruction. By the words that he maliciously inspired Pilate to utter he tried to frustrate the designs of God, and by the words he uttered by the mouths of the Jews he unwillingly and unconsciously seconded the intentions of Our Divine Saviour, who desired to die for the salvation of man. By the words of Pilate he tried to lay a snare in Our Saviour's path to prevent Him going to Calvary, by the words of the Jews he himself fell into a snare, while Jesus continued His way to the Mount of Sacrifice.

Thus does Jesus, with His Divine wisdom, escape the snare prepared for Him by Satan, and He causes the destruction of the Prince of Darkness instead.

Thus, by the power of His Divinity, does He surmount all the difficulties prepared by the devil to prevent His death, and He uses them as the very means to bring about His crucifixion.

Thus does His love for us cause Him to triumph over the malice of men and the hatred and cunning of hell itself.

Ah, truly, what love He has shown in accomplishing this! We must, indeed, penetrate the depths of His Sacred Heart to form some idea of it.

When the ungrateful Jews answered Pilate, 'Not this Man, but Barabbas,' what did the Heart of Jesus say? In the midst of these impious cries and blasphemous yells He is silent, but is His Heart silent also? Ah no! His Heart is pleading for us. He addresses Himself to His Heavenly Father, and says to Him in *love* what the Jews cry out in *malice* and *hatred*, 'Not *this* Man, but Barabbas.' It is as if He would say: 'O, My Father! Barabbas does not love men, and *I* love them intensely. The blood of Barabbas cannot save mankind, for it is unclean. My Blood, innocent and Divine, can alone redeem man, and be a worthy ransom for him. My Father, let Barabbas go free, and let Me die, in order that the Sacrifice be completed and man redeemed.'

This interior prayer of Jesus is immediately answered, and it is by the efficacy of this prayer, rather than by the malice of men or the rage of hell, that Barabbas is set free and Jesus left in the hands of His enemies to be put to death. *Res mira præter omnium opinionem! Subit sententiam Jesus et statim Barabbas solvitur,* says St. Athanasius. Such a thing is contrary to all human reason. The innocent Jesus is condemned, and at the same time the criminal Barabbas is liberated. 'But,' continues this holy Doctor, 'in this circumstance do not consider only the cruelty of the Jews, but rather look upon the condemnation of Jesus as the mystery of the deliverance of the whole human race.' Barabbas here represents the *old* Adam with his guilty posterity, and Jesus Christ is the *new* Adam. So when the *new* Adam is condemned to death, the *old* Adam is delivered, and with him his unhappy children. Thus the 'new Adam,' Jesus Christ, is 'the Desired of all nations.' He is the Man-God, the gentle Lamb of God, who offers Himself for us in order to redeem us. But let us return again to Pilate.

When a man is walking on a slippery incline it is easy for his own weight to drag him down and cause him to fall into the abyss below. Pilate, by his weakness and indecision, found himself in this position. It is not, therefore, surprising that he glides from one injustice into another, until in the end he falls a complete

victim to his own pusillanimity. He is anxious to satisfy the Jews, and in wishing also to spare Jesus He puts Him in contrast with Barabbas, with the result that, in his weakness, he is forced to condemn the innocent and pardon the guilty.

Before signing the sentence of death Pilate returns to his former idea of scourging Jesus, foolishly hoping thus to moderate the hatred of these savage men, and to turn them from their persistence in demanding His death.

Pilate subjects Our Divine Saviour to a most sad and humiliating flagellation, not in accomplishment of what he considers to be his duty, but simply because his weakness prompts it.

Here, again, it is the devil who acts through Pilate and the merciless executioners. Always tormented by doubt, he wishes to discover at any cost if Jesus Christ is really the Son of God. He does not know that the time has not yet come for him to know it. It is written in the Book of Wisdom (ii. 19) 'that the wicked have examined Him by outrages and tortures,' in order to know if He be the Son of God. 'For,' say they (*ibid.*), 'if He be the true Son of God, He will defend Him, and will deliver Him from the hands of His enemies.' These words apply to Satan, who is the Prince of Wickedness. He it was who suggested to Pilate to scourge Our Saviour. Also it was he who encouraged the executioners, when scourging Jesus, to reduce His Body to one huge wound, from the crown of

His Head to the soles of His Feet, all in order to find out whether or no He was the Son of God.

Either Jesus Christ will succumb under this scourging, says the demon to himself, and in that case He is only a *Man*, or He will work a wonderful miracle to preserve Himself. He does, indeed, work a great miracle in not dying under such cruel torments, and this miracle proves His Divinity. The devil, in his pride, does not perceive this, and he remains in doubt.

Another reason why this very flagellation is a proof of the Divinity of Our Saviour is that it is the scourging foretold by the prophet when he described the pitiable state to which His sufferings would reduce the Redeemer of the world. Our Saviour spoke of it Himself when He told His Apostles (St. Luke xviii. 32 *et seq.*) that 'the Son of Man shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked and scourged and spit upon.'

Behold Him, as He submits to this dreadful punishment by which He lets Himself be bruised and crushed, as it were, beneath the weight of Divine justice on account of our sins. As Isaias had said: 'He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins' (Isa. liii. 5). It was we who were the guilty ones, and we deserved to be scourged in hell by Divine justice; but Jesus, innocence itself, let Himself be scourged in our stead to deliver us from eternal stripes.

In speaking to the High Priests and the multitude Pilate had called Jesus the 'King of the

Jews.' The soldiers, laying hold of this expression, thought to make use of it to increase the sufferings and humiliations of their prisoner. It is a new effort on the part of Satan to discover by different and yet more barbarous means whether Jesus Christ is really God.

Having scourged Our Divine Saviour, the cruel and insolent soldiers force Him to sit on a block of stone, and plaiting a crown of thorns, they press it down on His Sacred Head. They cover His bruised and bleeding shoulders with an old scarlet cloak, and for a sceptre they force a reed into His trembling Hand. Nor is this all. They make mockery of adoring Him by saying with bended knee : ' Hail, King of the Jews !' They strike Him with their fists, and spit in His Face. Then, in order to add still more to His pain and distress, they snatch the reed from His Hand, and strike Him on the Head, thereby causing the thorns to pierce still deeper into His aching Brows. The Evangelists tell us : *Et illuserunt ei* (St. Matt. xxvii. 31), *et dabant ei alapas* (St. John xix. 3), *et genuflexo ante eum, dicebant. Ave Rex Judæorum* (St. Matt. xxvii. 29), *et percutiebant caput ejus arundine et conspuebant eum* (St. Mark xv. 19). Jesus suffers it all without a murmur, with sublime patience and meekness. Oh, let us strive to penetrate this mystery. Surely it contains some grand, some heavenly lesson.

Jesus had already told Pilate that His kingdom

was not of this world. He wished him to know that it differed from earthly kingdoms. 'Go forth now, oh ye daughters of Sion, and see this new King, see this King of Peace, this true Solomon. See Him in His royal robes. This day is the happiest of His earthly life. It is the day of His espousals ; it is the day when His loving Heart is brimming over with joy, even in the midst of His humiliations — *Egredimini filiæ Sion, et videte Regem Salomonem in diademate, in die desponsationis illius et in die lætitiæ cordis ejus* (Cant. iii. 11).

To-day this King of a new earth puts on, before all creatures, the insignia of Royalty which distinguishes Him from all earthly kings. It is to-day that, in the royal robes in which He is clothed, and which seem abject in the eyes of the worldly, He displays His magnificence over all the monarchs of the earth.

But what is this astonishing magnificence that this new King shows forth to-day ? Gaze on Him in the midst of His enemies, and you will see it. His enemies themselves, without knowing it, make it shine forth all the brighter. The soldiers, in mocking the royal dignity of Jesus ; Pilate, in allowing this action ; and the Jews, in applauding it, were all concurring to the establishment of the true royalty of Our Divine Saviour. They showed Him forth in all His majesty, in all His splendour, in all His supernatural grandeur, and Jesus Christ shows Him-

self to be in very truth the God and King who rules and ravishes all hearts.

All the fury of the Jews and the Roman soldiers have caused Jesus to suffer has helped to establish His kingdom. Jesus Himself ruled it should be so, and He embraced the scorn and the suffering with all His Heart and Will, out of pure love for man.

Caiphas, impious as he was, had prophesied the death of Our Saviour without understanding it himself, 'and now,' cries St. Jerome ('In St. Matt.,' lib. iv., xxvii. 27), 'the soldiers cover Him with insults without knowing what they are doing, but all in ignorance they are but accomplishing the royal designs of Jesus Christ. The more the royal dignity of Our Divine Saviour is attacked by these cruel and sacrilegious men, so much the more clearly does His Divinity manifest itself to the eyes of faith.'

Jesus is King, but He is a King who promises to His subjects here below only sufferings, persecutions, and the cross. *He is King*, but only over those who renounce themselves and are ready to suffer all for love of Him. *He is King*, but He is King of afflicted souls, who walk in the narrow way of Eternal Life and follow the pathway of the Cross. Such a King ought, indeed, to be crowned with thorns. A crown of gold would ill suit Him; such are used by earthly kings. Under the rule of this crown of thorns are to be found all true worshippers. They are in all parts

of the earth, and lovingly do they serve and reverence it. This crown, sharp and thorny though it be, far from degrading Our Divine Saviour, is a glory to Him, and it shows forth once again that He is God, our King.

Jesus is King, and He would spread His empire, not by strength of arms, but by the force of His love. He is the only King who, in order to show His power, uses weakness to conquer strength, and employs the little to triumph over the great things of this world. And the only sceptre which is suitable to such a King is a reed, a weak and frail plant, for He needs no support.

He who is all sufficient in Himself uses this frail sceptre to strike the mighty and the proud, and it gains power from the power that wields it. 'With a reed in His Hand,' says St. Jerome, 'He writes the sacrilege and signs the condemnation of the Jews. With this same sceptre, frail and weak, He writes the forfeiture of earthly kings, and it is with it He will sign the sentence of the wicked. All earthly sceptres will break, His alone shall remain. Weak as it may look, it is yet infinitely strong, this sceptre of the King crowned with thorns.

Purple has always been the colour distinctive of royalty. A new purple robe, embellished with gold and embroidered in jewels, would have been unsuitable to Jesus ; it would have classed Him with earthly kings. His kingdom is not of this

world, therefore has Our Saviour chosen a ragged scarlet cloak, rejected by all others—one that has lost its first brightness, because He wishes now to re-dye it in His Blood, and thus show the children of His Church that if needs be they must be ready to shed their blood for love of Him. And so, in truth, thousands of martyrs have sacrificed their life's blood for this King crowned with thorns and clad in a ragged scarlet cloak. Thus by the strength of His weakness has He triumphed over executioners and tyrants, and His martyrs, in imitation of Him, have washed their robes in the Blood of the Lamb.

The world does not understand the reign of Jesus. He reigns by humility, sweetness, and patience, pardoning all injustice, insults, and persecution. In order to teach us this truth, Our Saviour allowed Himself to be struck, mocked, and spat upon. He permitted His enemies to offer Him false adoration in the house of Pilate, and He endured it all with Divine sweetness and patience. By these traits we recognise Him as a King whose kingdom is not of this world. We see, at the same time, the works He accomplished, and the virtues we must practise if we would be His loyal subjects and obtain the reward He has prepared for us.

Behold, then, Jesus Christ our King is God, in spite of all the opprobrium His enemies heap upon Him. Indeed, it is they who have proved

Him to be both God and King. Without knowing it, they confessed Him to be King in saturating Him with outrage. Scornfully they honoured Him as King. Wishing to humiliate Him, they enthroned Him as King, and as St. Ambrose says : 'With their own hands they give Him the insignia of royalty. They salute Him as a King. They crown Him as a conqueror. They adore Him as God.' A King who rules thus, without exterior power, who obliges His enemies to give Him unconsciously all the marks of royalty, and who makes them adore Him in spite of the envy and malice of their hearts such a King must be, indeed, the King-God promised from the beginning—God the King of heaven and earth.

ACT OF REPARATION.

O Jesus, my adorable Saviour, Thou art indeed the God of whom Isaias spoke when he said, 'God our King will save us' (Isa. xxxiii. 22), and I see Thee now bearing the insignia of Thy Royalty. This ragged scarlet cloak around Thy Shoulders, this reed forced into Thy bleeding Hand, this crown of thorns pressed into Thy throbbing Brow—all these are the marks of Thy Royalty. Thy enemies thought to ridicule Thee and treat Thee as a mock king, but try as they might they could not take from Thee Thy Divine Royalty, which Thou dost hold with Thy Eternal

Father. They could abase Thee for a time, but they could not destroy Thee. Thy Royalty shone forth from all Thy degradation with brighter lustre, even as the lily rises, pure and odorous, from the muddy soil.

Men still attack Thy Divinity. O my God! they undertake a futile struggle with Thee, in which they must in the end be defeated. O grant, Divine Saviour, that their hearts be changed, and that from being Thy bitter enemies they may become Thy fervent adorers.

O my Divine Jesus, I desire on my part to praise Thee as much as is in my power, to bless Thee, to love Thee, and thus to make reparation for their malice and the insults they offer to Thy Sacred Heart.

Yes, my Lord, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, I adore Thee, and I unite my adorations and praises to those of all the just who praise Thee in Heaven and on earth. I unite them to the adorations of Thy angels, to the ardent praises of Thy seraphim, and above all to the sublime glory rendered Thee by Thine own Immaculate Mother.

O Mary, behold the state to which they have reduced thy Divine Son, the dearest object of thy maternal heart! See Him covered with wounds caused by the cruel scourge. See Him clothed in a ragged purple robe and crowned with thorns. Thou dost adore His Divinity the more, as it is hidden under the veil of His suffer-

ings and humiliations. Do Thou also, I pray thee, increase thy adorations even as blasphemous men redouble their insults to Him, and beg Him also to shower His mercies on these sinful men, that they may be converted and acknowledge Him their God and their King.

CHAPTER IX

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH BY PILATE. HIS DIVINITY SHINES FORTH ON THIS OCCASION

PILATE had recognised and publicly acknowledged the innocence of Jesus, and therefore Our Divine Saviour ought to have been set free ; but as the Divine Victim was confronted by the *hatred* of His accusers, as well as the *weakness* of His judge, He was bound to be sacrificed to one or the other. It was now that Pilate committed his great sin—in not having the courage to act according to his conscience and in opposition to the chief priests and the Jewish mob.

We find him, on the contrary, condemning Our Saviour after having declared Him innocent, and this is what we are now about to consider.

After Jesus has been scourged, crowned with thorns, and covered with ignominies and insults by the soldiers, Pilate brings Him once more in the sight of the people, and shows Him to them, in order, as he hopes, to move them to pity and turn them from their determination of putting Him to death. Standing on the terrace, in the

sight of all the multitude, he points to Jesus, and says: 'Behold I bring Him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in Him' (St. John xix. 4). After saying these words he stretches out his hand and raises the old scarlet cloak that envelopes Our Saviour, thus showing the spectators His lacerated Body, covered with wounds and sores; and pointing to His thorn-crowned Head and His Sacred Face, disfigured with blows and covered with Blood and filthy spittle, he says to them: *Ecce Homo!* ('Behold the Man!'). 'Behold the miserable state to which you have reduced this Man, whom you accused of aspiring to royalty. Gaze on Him, and see if He be not more worthy of pity than of hate.'

At the sight of this piteous and heartrending spectacle, and at Pilate's words, a sentiment of horror fills the crowd; a low and involuntary murmur is heard, a spontaneous compassion is roused in their hearts. But the priests, hearing this, and fearing the sympathy of the people might cause them to try and liberate Jesus, redoubled their cries of 'Crucify Him! crucify Him!'

Pilate answers, in disgust: 'Take Him you and crucify Him, for I find no cause in Him.' The Jews then cry out: 'We have a law, and according to the law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God' (St. John xix. 6, 7). This reply disconcerts Pilate, because he knows nothing about such a law. However, he thinks it

would be dangerous to contradict the people on so delicate a point when they were so excited, and in such irritation he feared they might revolt or grow violent, and above all he feared they might complain of him to Cæsar, for as the Evangelist tells us: 'When Pilate had heard this saying, he feared the more' (St. John xix. 8).

Pilate takes Jesus inside the Prætorium again, and still wavering, he asks Him: 'Whence art Thou?' (*Unde es Tu?*). But Jesus does not answer him. Pilate knows very well that Jesus comes from Galilee, from Nazareth, so it is not because he wishes to know *whence* He is that he questions Him. What he really desires to discover is whether or no He is the Son of God. By the Son of God Pilate understands one of the false gods the Romans worship, for if He were this, Pilate would fear His vengeance if he sentenced Him to death.

But Jesus is silent. Pilate indignantly turns and says to Jesus: 'Speakest Thou not to me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and I have power to release Thee?' (St. John xix. 10). Jesus would now give Pilate a lesson, so He answers him: 'Thou shouldst not have any power against Me unless it were given thee from above' (St. John xix. 11). When He said these words, Our Saviour was still crowned with thorns, and bore also about Him the other signs of His Royalty, to show plainly that He was speaking as King and God, for it was He who, with His

Father, had given this power to Pilate, and He had freely delivered Himself into his hands, otherwise no one could have power over Him.

These words of Our Saviour made an impression on Pilate, and after hearing them St. John tells us 'he sought to release Him.' The Evangelist does not tell us what means Pilate made use of, or what proposals he may have made to the Jews; but he tells us their answer, yelled forth with renewed fury: 'If thou release this Man thou art not Cæsar's friend, for whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar' (St. John xix. 12). At this threat Pilate is troubled. Once more Jesus is brought forth. Pilate goes to his judgment-seat, and having Jesus before him, he shows Him again to the people, saying: 'Behold your King!' (*Ecce Rex vester!*). The Jews, maddened with rage, cry out' 'Crucify Him: crucify Him!' 'But,' says Pilate, 'shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answer: 'We have no King but Cæsar' (St. John xix. 11).

At this last burst of Jewish fury Pilate does not know what to do. His embarrassment is visible in his face. He is stupefied, as though struck by a thunderbolt. He is terrified by the tumult and the strident yells of the people whom he has infuriated. He gazes helplessly around on the excited crowd, who are being stirred up by the priests and magistrates. He sees the inhuman executioners, impatient to fall on their prey, and his last remnant of courage deserts

him. Thoughtful and sad, weary of vain shuffling and cowardly pretexts, he takes the pen and signs the sentence of death against the innocent Lamb of God. Jesus is to be crucified. Jesus is condemned as a malefactor.

Let us now take the principal points of this lamentable scene which we behold, and examine how Jesus shows us, amid these fresh humiliations, that He is really God.

There are some truths we must never lose sight of in considering the mysteries of the life of Our Divine Saviour, and especially in meditating on His Passion. We have already remarked—but we must repeat it here—that Our Saviour *willingly* submitted to all He suffered, and also that He knew in advance all the circumstances of His Passion, even the most minute. He did not foretell them all, but He foresaw them all, and when He deemed advisable He spoke of them in a clear, unmistakable manner. Also, we must remember that all that was done by men during His Passion was done by them as being the blind instruments of Divine Providence. Without their knowing it, they were contributing, even at the instigation of the devil, to the accomplishment of the Divine decrees, and through their wickedness He who alone can make good come forth from evil worked the sublime miracle of man's redemption. Bearing these thoughts in mind, let us now return again to our subject.

'We have a law,' say the Jews to Pilate, 'and

according to this law Jesus of Nazareth ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God' (St. John xix. 7). But here the Jews have made a mistake in saying that Jesus *made Himself* the Son of God. By 'making Himself the Son of God' they mean that He has no right to that title. 'To make Himself the Son of God' would be to do what Satan and his angels tried to do before being cast out of heaven. Jesus did not *make Himself* the Son of God, He *is* the Son of God, and He has proved that He is such. He has given such incontestable proofs of this that the Jews themselves have called Him a great prophet sent by God. 'A great prophet is risen up amongst us, and God hath visited His people' (St. Luke vii. 16).

If He has *said* He is Son of God, He has not done so without giving indisputable proofs, and by the miracles He has worked in their midst He has shown that He is truly the Man-God.

The Jews say they 'have a law,' and 'according to this law Jesus *ought to die*.' But what law do they refer to? Is it the law that condemns the blasphemer to death? Because if Jesus has said He is the Son of God, and has proved by Divine miracles that He is such, He is not a blasphemer.

Again, God would not work miracles to authorize lies and blasphemy. What law is it, then, by which Jesus ought to die? It is God who puts these words on the lips of the Jews, *Nos legem habemus*. *He* knows what law it is.

The law according to which Jesus ought to die is the law of Moses, of the prophets, of the Psalms, where the death of the Messias on the cross is expressly foretold. This is the law which Jesus and His Eternal Father wrote from the beginning.

Jesus, then, must die. 'He ought to die'—*Debet mori*, because His own law, foretold by the prophets, must be obeyed. Yes, perfidious Jews, He must die. 'He ought to die'—*Debet mori*, but in fulfilment of His own decree, not in consequence of your hatred; *Debet mori*, because He earnestly desires it in His Divine charity, not because you thirst for it in the malice of your hearts; *Debet mori*, because He will die willingly, not because you can make Him die; *Debet mori*, because He is the Man-God, the Son of God by nature, the Son of Man by free choice, and He will save man by His Passion and Death.

And who can tell of a culprit who has made his judge fear and tremble? Such a thing is not heard of in the histories of men.

Jesus Christ, condemned as guilty, bound with cords and chains, wounded, bruised, and bleeding, makes Pilate, His judge, tremble with fear. The Jews accuse Our Saviour of making Himself the Son of God, and at these words 'Son of God' Pilate is seized with a fear he cannot conceal. *Pilatus cum audisset hos sermones magis timuit*, says the Evangelist. Is it because Our Saviour, standing before him, bears on His Features the stamp of Divinity, which never abandoned Him,

and which shone more brilliantly as men tried most to disfigure Him? Is it because, beside this ray of Divinity, Pilate sees a miracle of meekness, of patience, of modesty? We know not, but when he heard the Jews declare that this Man made Himself the Son of God, he feared to pronounce sentence of death against Him, lest Jesus Christ should really participate in some manner in the Divinity. He put off as long as he could pronouncing sentence against Him.

Pilate has good reason to fear, for this prisoner standing before him is the Man-God, He who had caused His enemies to fall to the ground in Gethsemani, and who, with an act of His will, could shake the foundations of the earth.

When Jesus remains silent before Pilate, who tries to make Him say something to help his own embarrassment, Pilate is irritated, and says sharply: 'Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and power to release Thee?' Jesus wishes to correct this presumptuous speech, but He corrects as God, and Pilate has nothing further to say. 'Thou shouldst not have any power against Me,' says Our Saviour, 'unless it were given thee from above.' Then He adds: 'Therefore he that hath delivered Me to thee hath the greater sin' (St. John xix. 11).

Who is this prisoner reduced to so pitiable a state, but at the same time so calm, so patient, and so dignified, who fears not the threats of His judge, although He is at his mercy? Who is

this prisoner who, with so much authority, reproves him for the bad use he makes of his power, and who, reading his heart, weighs his crime and the guilt of his sin, telling him that great as is his cowardice he is not so guilty as Judas or the Jews ? Ah, this prisoner, so patient, so courageous, so humble, and so far-seeing, is truly the Man-God, who weighs the mountains, and who knows the exact blackness and enormity of every sin of man, and who chastises each one as he deserves. This calm and gentle prisoner is the Man-God, who says to proud and impious men *now* what He said formerly by the mouth of His prophets to the inhabitants of Idumea : ' Though thou be exalted as an eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down ' (Abdias i. 4), ' and I will discover thy shame to thy face ' (Nah. iii. 5).

We have already remarked that all that was done to Jesus in His Passion was done by men as blind instruments of the Most High, and they contributed unconsciously, and even by their malice, to the accomplishment of God's designs. We had a convincing example of this in the person of Caiphas. Wicked as he was, he predicted the necessity of Jesus dying for the salvation of men. Let us now examine the words which Pilate addresses to the Jews after Jesus has been scourged and crowned with thorns, and we shall find they bear out our argument.

Pilate leads Jesus on to the balcony of his

palace. He shows Our Saviour to the people in this sad and shameful state, and he says to them: 'Behold the Man.' A few minutes after he adds: 'Behold your King.' The weakness and cowardice of Pilate when face to face with the Jews is only too apparent to them, and they trade on it to force from him the sentence of death against Jesus.

However, now behold Pilate, weak and cowardly as he is. See how he keeps to the same language when referring to the prisoner—language of which he does not realize the meaning, but which publicly proclaims Jesus as grand and worthy of honour. The more the Jews clamour for the death of Jesus, so much the more persistently does Pilate speak of Him as 'Christ,' the Anointed, and as 'King of the Jews.' This 'Man' of whom Pilate speaks on the balcony, 'Behold the Man,' is the same Man of whom Caiphas had already spoken in prophesying that His death is necessary for the salvation of the people. Can we help but say that the words of Pilate are a continuation of the prophecy of Caiphas, and that they do but explain it in further detail? Caiphas had said 'that one man must die for the salvation of the people.' Who is this man? Here He is—*Ecce Homo!* He is Jesus Christ. This Jesus is your King. *Ecce Rex vester!* Pilate continually returns to the same idea that possesses him. To call Jesus repeatedly 'King of the Jews' before the Jews themselves is the same as if he had said,

'Behold your Messias!' because in all the sacred writings, especially in those of the prophets, the Messias was given the title of 'King of the Jews.'

Was this perhaps the intention of Pilate? We know, at least, that it was the intention of God, who used the mouth of Pilate for the execution of His designs. St. Augustine tells us that the Most High had given this cowardly Governor an 'intimate persuasion' that Jesus Christ was the true King of the Jews, and so, in spite of his cowardice, no human consideration could efface from his mind what the God of Eternal Truth had imprinted there. We shall see this still more clearly in speaking of the Title on the Cross.

Being, then, the true King of the Jews, Jesus is the promised Messias. Being the promised Messias, He is the Saviour of the world. As only God could save the world, we must naturally conclude that Jesus Christ is the Man-God, equal to the Father in all things. The words of Pilate alone would lead us to this conclusion.

ACT OF REPARATION.

O my Jesus, what can I do but prostrate myself before Thee, and adore Thy Divinity? Yes, I adore Thee with my whole heart in the state of humiliation to which Thou hast been reduced by Thy love for man. I desire by this adoration to make reparation for all the irreverences, profana-

tions, and sacrileges which have been committed, and are now being committed, against Thy Divine Majesty, above all by the unbelievers of our own time, who, being plunged in the mire of infidelity, will never offer Thee the homage which is Thy due.

My desire, O my Divine Saviour, is to offer Thee as much glory as they would give Thee altogether if they offered Thee faithfully all the adoration in their power and all that Thou desirest to receive from them. My desire is to reunite in my own faith and love all the faith and love that these poor sinners would be capable of offering Thee during the whole course of their lives, and during all eternity, if they served Thee with all their hearts.

In order to sanctify these my offerings, and to make them more agreeable in Thy sight, I unite them with all the adorations of Thy Holy Church triumphant in heaven, and especially with those of Mary, Thy most pure Mother.

O Virgin, incomparable in thy beauty and sanctity, true masterpiece of the Hand of God, and compassionate Mother of all poor sinners, look with pity on these poor ungrateful children of God. Do thou thyself show them thy Divine Son. Say to them, 'Behold your King!' and by the charm and power of thy words change their hearts so that they may spend the rest of their lives detesting their past conduct, and may show themselves faithful adorers of Jesus, true God and true Man. Amen.

CHAPTER X

PETER, JOHN, AND JUDAS. HOW THEY TESTIFY TO THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST

BEFORE continuing the history of Our Saviour's Passion, let us pause for a brief space and turn our eyes to three persons who, in very different ways, took part in this terrible tragedy. They are Peter, Judas, and John. *Peter*, the converted sinner; *Judas*, the reprobate; and *John*, the faithful and innocent disciple. Peter was converted in the hall of Caiphas, Judas died of despair before the death of his Victim, John accompanied Jesus to Calvary, and stood faithfully by His cross.

What proofs of Our Saviour's Divinity can we draw from considering these three Apostles? We will begin with St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles.

When Jesus surrendered Himself into the hands of His enemies in the Garden of Gethsemani, the Apostles were all with Him; but when they beheld Him a captive, bound with cords and chains, they were seized with fear, and all fled. Peter ran away with the others, but immediately

after he came back, and followed his Master to the house of Annas. It was bitterly cold, and Peter, shivering in the crowd, made his way to the fire to warm himself. There it was that the devil was awaiting him to tempt him and make him fall.

Peter tried to appear indifferent to what was going on around him in the hall of Annas, and he was talking to those beside him when a servant maid, coming up, asked him if he was not one of Our Saviour's disciples (St. John xviii. 17). Peter denied that he was—*Non sum*. Jesus is then conducted to Caiphas. Peter still follows Him, and again, while he is warming himself at the fire, they ask him if he is a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth. Peter again denies, this time with an oath, to make it more emphatic.

After about an hour's time (St. Luke xxii. 59) others among the crowd put the same question to him. Peter denies for the third time, and this time 'he curses and swears that he knows not the Man.' He now hears the cock crow, and he remembers the word that Jesus spoke to him—'Before the cock crow, thou wilt deny Me thrice' (St. Luke xxii. 34).

Behold Peter, chief of the Apostles, and one of those most devoted to Jesus—behold he has fallen! Does this denial of Peter's point in any way to the fact that Jesus Christ is not God? Oh no! it only proves that Peter is a weak man, and that he is able to fall like the rest of men.

Peter denied his Master three times, but it was

because he relied too much on his own strength. Our Saviour had warned him of the danger. He had foretold it to him, and not only the denial itself, but also all the circumstances that would accompany it. In foretelling his fall to St. Peter Our Divine Lord said (St. Mark xiv. 30): 'Amen, I say to thee, to-day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice.' Here each word is a prophecy; we count six.

To begin with, Our Saviour addresses Himself without hesitation to St. Peter, to the exclusion of the other Apostles, and says to him: *Tu* ('I say to thee, *thou*'). 'Peter, *thou* wilt fall; *thou* wilt deny Me.' This is the first prophecy. Our Saviour then says *when* this denial shall take place—*hodie* (*to-day*), not *some day*. This is the second prophecy. It will be before the day breaks, during the darkness, '*even in this night*' (*in hac nocte*). This is the third prophecy. Our Divine Saviour will be yet more explicit. He says: *Priusquam gallus vocem dederit* ('*before the cock crow*'). Here is the fourth prophecy. And again, how often shall the cock crow before the denial is accomplished? *Bis* (*before the cock crow twice*). This is the fifth prophecy. And the sixth prophecy shows that Our Lord knows *how often* Peter will deny Him—'*Ter me es negaturus*' ('*Thou wilt deny Me thrice*')—not more and not less.

These are surely not the prophecies of a man who receives only a passing illumination; they

are the words of One who holds the key of the human heart, who knows all that passes, and who can read the future even as the present. They are the prophecies of the Man-God, of Him who fashioned the heart of this man, and who knows the precise moment when this poor heart will fail, because there was too much reliance on self.

It follows, then, that in denying Jesus Christ Peter did not deny an ordinary man; he denied the Man-God. St. Augustine has admirably proved this in his sixty-sixth treatise on St. John (n. 2). According to the mind of this holy Doctor we argue in this manner: Jesus said to St. Peter, 'Thou wilt deny Me thrice.' Who is this 'Me' of whom Our Saviour speaks if it is not Himself? (*Quid est Me nisi quod erat*). And is He other than the Christ? (*Et quid nisi Christus erat?*). Peter then denied Christ, the Lord, his God (*Christum Dominum Deum suum negavit*). Peter denied the same Jesus, continues the holy Doctor, who, after His Resurrection, allowed the incredulous Thomas to touch His Human Body, and whom Thomas recognised as 'his Lord and his God'—*Dominus meus et Deus meus* (St. John xx. 28). Thomas touched the Humanity, and he recognised the Divinity. If, then, Peter denied that which Thomas touched, Peter offended the same Divinity which Thomas acknowledged (*Si ergo quod iste tetigit hoc Petrus negavit, quod iste exclamavit, hoc Petrus offendit*).

We see, then, that the very *fall* of Peter itself leads us to recognise the Divinity of Jesus Christ. We have seen the fall of Peter ; let us now consider his conversion. Peter has fallen grievously by this his triple denial. He fell by himself, but he cannot raise himself without help from above. Jesus is there, a few paces from him. He is in the midst of the soldiers, who maltreat Him, but in His own sad hour He has not forgotten His unhappy disciple. He knows the gravity of his fall, but He sees that in his big impulsive heart Peter still loves his Master with an ardent love, and Jesus longs for his conversion. What does Jesus do ? In the Garden of Olives He showed His Divinity by a *word*, and He conquered His enemies. Now He converts Peter by a *look*. Only a look—but it is a look from the Man-God, from Him who can thus speak to the sinner's heart, thus touch the sinner's heart, thus change the sinner's heart in an instant.

It is not a threatening or angry look that He casts on His ungrateful disciple ; it is a gentle, a kind, compassionate look—a look which shows Peter all the tenderness that his Master feels in His Heart for him. The Heart of Jesus discloses itself in that look. It shows Itself with all Its sweetness, with all Its mercy. It is only a look, a passing look, it is true, but It is an efficacious look, which touches the sinner's heart and makes him repent ; a look which brings

to his eyes a flood of tears wherewith to mourn for his sin.

Only a look from the Eyes of the Man-God can console and cure, enlighten and give hope at the same time. 'Ah! if Jesus had not looked Peter had never been converted' (Theophylactus 'In Luc'). Therefore Peter was converted because the Man-God looked on him. But not only did Jesus convert Peter by this glance, not only did He pardon him, but after the pardon was accorded He considered Peter as if he had never sinned. He left him in possession of all the privileges attached to the position of Head of the Church, of infallible master of truth and chief shepherd of souls. He confided to him, as His Vicar on earth, the pastoral care of His sheep and His lambs, the charge to watch over the bishops of His Church and over their flocks, and without again saying it to him Our Saviour confirmed the promise He had made before Peter's fall, that the gates of hell should never prevail against His Church, of which He had constituted Peter the Head on earth.

These very promises, which for nineteen centuries have been realized, and are still realized in our own time, despite the rage and persecution of tyrants and impious men, prove again that He who made them to Peter must be the Son of God, and the Corner Stone of that Church on which must be broken all those who, in the excess of their foolishness and malice, dare to deny His Divinity.

It is now time for us to speak of Judas. Terrible name! Would that it had never been! Judas, the chief of infidels and traitors, whose name no man dare bear. Judas fell through his spirit of egotism, his pride and avarice, and because he would not benefit by the doctrine and the favours granted him by Our Saviour.

Before he betrayed his Master and sold Him for the vile sum of thirty pence, Judas had already denied the Divinity of Jesus in his own heart and lost his faith.

This traitor is, then, the leader of infidels who deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ. After losing his faith in this holy dogma he never regained it. No doubt he recognised the Divinity of his Master in the last moments of his despair; but then it seemed to him too late, and he thought his sin was too heinous for Jesus to forgive. So, having lost his faith, he betrayed his Divine Master with a hypocritical kiss, fancying Our Saviour did not know of his treason; and when he saw that Jesus was condemned to death by Pilate, and that it was now impossible to rescue Him from His enemies, despair took possession of him, and led him to kill himself.

What a terrible example for his followers! When Judas received the thirty pieces of silver from the priests as the payment for his black treason, the passion of avarice and his own incredulity had so blinded him that he did not realize the enormity of his crime; but some hours

after, when he heard that His Master had been condemned, and that He would die at the hands of His enemies, then the fatal bandage fell from his eyes, and a sudden ray of light showed him the Divinity of Jesus, His meekness and His innocence. This, joined to the trouble and agitation that Satan caused him to feel, plunged him into a terrible despair. Taking the thirty pieces of silver, he hurries to the temple, and throws them at the feet of the chief priests, saying : 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood' (St. Matt. xxvii. 4).

Who is this Innocent Man of whom Judas speaks ?

In looking on the scenes of the Sacred Passion we have seen that this Innocent Man is He whom Pilate has proclaimed to be the 'King of the Jews' and the 'Messias.'

Thus Jesus is publicly proclaimed 'innocent,' 'the Messias,' 'King of the Jews,' in the prætorium of Pilate, in the Temple of Jerusalem by a judge and even by a base traitor—by a pagan and by a fallen Apostle. These are public testimonies, given unasked, and when it would be more to human interest to refuse them. These testimonies were given when Jesus was being treated as a guilty Man and a public criminal. It is, then, the strength of Truth that forces this avowal, and constrains these men to proclaim at the same time the innocence and the Divinity of Our Saviour.

Judas flings down in the Temple the pieces of money that the priests have given him, but what use do the Jews make of it? Do they put it in the treasury, where the legal and voluntary offerings of the people are kept? 'No,' say they, 'it is not lawful to put it into the corbona, because it is the price of blood' (St. Matt. xxvii. 6).

What shameless hypocrisy! What, then, will they do with it? They consult together, and buy a little field which will serve as a burial-place for strangers. The field is called 'The Field of Blood'; that is to say, the field that was bought with the money paid to Judas for betraying the innocent Blood of Jesus Christ.

Thus do the Jews erect a lasting monument to their own wickedness, to the treason of Judas, and to the Divinity of Jesus Christ, their Messias. Yes, the Jews themselves fulfil the prophecy of Jeremias (xi. 12) even while they are putting the Innocent One to death. All who pass by the Field of Blood can tell the world: 'This is a lasting monument to the Innocence of Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews, the Man-God.'

But let us turn from the traitor Judas, drawing a veil over his despairing end, and let us now speak of 'the disciple whom Jesus loved,' and listen to his words on the Divinity of his Master.

Who is 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'? It is St. John—he who, at the Last Supper, laid his head on his Master's Bosom, he to whom were revealed the secrets of his Master's Heart. Among

all the Apostles he is the only one who was faithful to Jesus throughout His Passion the only one who was an eye-witness of all Our Saviour suffered. His testimony is unquestionable, bearing all the marks of truth. 'This is that disciple who giveth testimony of these things, and hath written these things, and we know that his testimony is true' (St. John xxi. 24).

St. John is simple, candid, and innocent, hating falsehood and loving truth. He writes with impartiality. True, he recounts what is glorious to Jesus, but he also narrates all the humiliations He endured, and he assures us that all that he says is true. Let us see, then, if he gives us any assurance of the Divinity of Our Saviour, whom Pilate unjustly condemned, for with the other Evangelists he has described His sufferings and degradation. If he has not deceived us about the latter, surely we may trust him to tell us truly of the former also.

In his first Epistle (i. 3), St. John says: 'That which we have seen and have heard, we declare unto you.' In the same Epistle he says: 'By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent His Only-Begotten Son into the world that we may live by Him' (*ibid.*, iv. 9); and he adds: 'Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God' (iv. 15).

In the first chapter of his Gospel (in which he recounts Our Saviour's sufferings) he says:

'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us (and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the Only-Begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth' (St. John i. 14).

Again, in his Epistle, St. John says: 'And we know that the Son of God is come, and He hath given us understanding that we may know the true God, and may be in His true Son. This is the true God and Life Eternal' (1 St. John v. 20). In the same Epistle (v. 10) he says: 'He that believeth in the Son of God hath the testimony of God in himself. He that believeth not the Son, maketh Him a liar.' Animated with a holy zeal, and burning with a personal love for his Master, he cries out: 'Who is a liar, but he who denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is Antichrist, who denieth the Father and the Son' (1 St. John ii. 22). But then he says more gently, in another place: 'Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God' (1 St. John iv. 15). 'And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ' (1 St. John iii. 23). 'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?' (1 St. John v. 5).

Finally, St. John tells us that his testimony is irrefutable, because it is the testimony of the truth. He tells us that the Son of God came into the world to save the world, as a Victim of propitiation for our sins. He tells us that he

saw the Son of God and heard His words, and that this Son of God is Jesus Christ. He tells us that it is the will of the Eternal Father that we acknowledge Jesus as His well-beloved Son and Our Saviour, and that if we refuse this we shall be liars and Antichrists.

Therefore this Jesus Christ who converted St. Peter by one look of love; this Jesus Christ whom Judas betrayed, but whom he afterwards declared to be innocent; this Jesus Christ whom St. John both saw and heard and recognised as glorious even in the midst of His shame—this Jesus Christ is truly God, the Son of God, the Man-God.

ACT OF REPARATION.

O my Divine Jesus, how can men deny Thy Divinity after such solemn testimony? After hearing the testimony of Thy three Apostles who lived intimately with Thee, and conversed with Thee, and who saw Thy wonderful works, how is it that men are still to be found who dare doubt that Thou art the Son of God?

O my Divine Redeemer, I tremble at the thought of the chastisements that await these impious blasphemous men who dare to attack that which constitutes Thy very essence. In denying Thy Divinity, they put God Himself in the wrong, and rank themselves with those who say: 'There is no God.' How terrible must

be the punishment reserved for these monsters of iniquity! If men who, believing in Thee, and die in their sins, are plunged for ever in hell, what must be the chastisement of those who, having maliciously lost their faith, dare to deny Thy Divinity?

O Divine Master, what will become of the unfortunate sinner when, at the hour of death, he falls into the Hands of Thine inexorable justice? Ah! then, indeed, Thou wilt say: 'He who does not believe is already judged.' There remains for him only the eternal fires.

Ah! if there be yet time, my God, let me throw myself at Thy Feet and implore pardon for these miserable sinners. Have pity on them, and in the excess of Thy mercy grant to them a great and special grace that will open their eyes to see the awful precipice that lies before them, in order that they may turn back and appease Thy anger, and for the future render Thee all the homage in their power.

O blessed Virgin Mary, obtain for them this grace. Thou who art the refuge of sinners, inspire them to have recourse to thee—thou who art so good, and whose maternal heart cannot reject any of thy children. Having obtained their pardon, help them, dear Mother, that they may persevere to the end, in spite of all the efforts of the devil to drag them to perdition.

CHAPTER XI

THE JOURNEY OF JESUS TO CALVARY AND HIS CRUCIFIXION. FURTHER PROOFS OF HIS DIVINITY

THROUGH cowardice Pilate pronounced sentence of death against Jesus. The joy of the Jews is at its height, and all the preparations are now made for leading Our Saviour to His Death. It has been arranged that He is to die outside the city, on Mount Calvary. This is one of the decrees of Providence. We will watch Our Divine Master on His Journey of Pain, we will consider His sufferings as He mounts the Altar of Sacrifice, and then we will behold Him in His terrible and agonizing Crucifixion. In His Journey, as in His Sacrifice, we will find numberless proofs of His Divinity.

As soon as sentence of death is pronounced against Our Saviour, the soldiers drag off the scarlet cloak with which He was clothed in derision, and He is clothed again in His own garments (St. Matt. xxvii. 31). The soldiers roughly force the cross upon Him—the cross on which He will sacrifice His precious Life. Joyfully He

accepts it, and lays it on His bleeding Shoulder. He is now ready to go to the Altar of Sacrifice. His thorny crown is still pressed upon His Brows, and as a few hours before He held His sceptre of a reed in His Hand, He now bears on His Shoulders the essential characteristic of His kingdom. This is truly the government of which Isaias spoke (ix. 6): 'And the government is upon His Shoulder.' It is a solid, firm government, because it is the government of the Man-God, who knows no change, and who, on the contrary, changes and transforms all the kingdoms of the earth by the sole power of the Cross, to which His Sacred Humanity is now imparting a Divine power.

Behold Jesus Christ, who is a King unlike all earthly kings! Behold He carries His government upon His Shoulder! You may say it is a humiliating government, but know you that it is by this government, so humble in appearance, that He draws all love and veneration to Himself. 'For which cause' (because it was so humiliating) 'God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a Name which is above all names; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth' (Phil. ii. 9, 10).

Bearing His cross He goes to Calvary. As soon as He is raised in the sight of all, the Holocaust for the sins of men, He will humble the pride of hell, and will triumph over Satan, by

revealing to him the mystery of Redemption, already accomplished, and by making Satan and his followers acknowledge Him to be truly the Son of God, in spite of His wounds and ignominies, and although He is dying on the infamous gibbet of the Cross.

Let us contemplate Jesus leaving Jerusalem with His Cross on His Shoulders. It causes Him unspeakable pain, for He is weary and very weak, but in thus bearing it He shows that He is more than Man. It was for the martyrs to show strength and joy when they ascended their altars of sacrifice; but Jesus, who would take all the bitterness from their pain and drink it Himself—Jesus carries His Cross in weakness and weariness, falling under its weight, and almost succumbing to the pain it causes Him.

Yes, He is very weak, poor suffering Saviour! but He is strong in the midst of His weakness—strong with the eternal strength of His Divinity.

We have already seen that Our Divine Master put Himself in our place, that He took our sins upon Him, and of His own free will, from pure love of us, received the chastisement that Divine Justice had prepared for men. Thus carrying His Cross, He would have us to understand that it is in reality our sins He is carrying. As St. Ambrose says: *Subjecit humerum suum cruci, ut peccata nostra portaret.* And it is really His Eternal Father who has placed this Cross upon His shoulders. 'And the Lord

hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all' (Isa. liii. 6).

Truly it needed a Divine strength to bear the weight of the sins of the whole world. Any one man, with only human power, could not have sustained the burden. This Divine strength which Jesus manifested came from the Person of the Word hidden under the veil of His Humanity. Truly nothing less than the strength of Divine Justice could thus weaken the holy Humanity, so intimately united to the Eternal Word.

The blows of Divine Justice could not smite Jesus for any faults of His own, for was He not Sanctity, Innocence, Purity itself? He was 'struck by God' because of *our* sins, because He put Himself in *our* place and willed to expiate our iniquities by His sufferings and death. Let us, therefore, prostrate ourselves at His Feet and adore His weakness.

The weakness and weariness of Jesus increase every moment. The Jews, the executioners themselves, perceive this, and not out of pity, but rather to prevent His dying before they can crucify Him, they relieve Him of the heavy burden of His Cross. A man of Cyrene, Simon, is passing at the time, and they force him to carry the Cross for Our Saviour. Jesus, following him, continues the way to Calvary, and in order to add to Our Divine Master's humiliation the Jews make Him walk

between the two thieves who are to be crucified with Him.

On the way to Calvary Jesus is surrounded by soldiers and the Jewish magistrates. He is followed by a number of men and women, and the executioners are beside Him, heaping insults on Him at every step at the instigation of the chief priests.

But the *women* of Jerusalem are sorrowful; they rend the air with their sobs and cries. Suddenly Jesus stands still. He turns to the multitude, and immediately the whole procession pauses. The soldiers, the Jews, even the executioners stand motionless. Jesus is about to give a last lesson to His enemies. With the air of a Master who teaches, of a Judge who has power, of a Ruler who governs, He turns to the crowd of women who are mourning and speaks to them. There is silence at once. The cries and insulting yells cease, the hooting and jeering stop, the groans, the blasphemies are no longer heard—only the firm but gentle Voice of Jesus rises above the sudden silence. 'Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children' (St. Luke xxiii. 28). And He continues: 'For behold the days shall come wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the breasts that have not given suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us, and to the hills: Cover us. For if in the green wood they do these

things, what shall be done in the dry?' (St. Luke xxiii. 29-31). 'If Divine Justice has dealt so fiercely with Me who am innocent, what will become of poor sinners when they fall into His power?'

Who is this Man who speaks with such assurance? Who is this Man who measures the judgments of God? Who speaks thus before His enemies? Who, on the way to His death, speaks with such coolness and firmness? When He speaks they all stop. He does not need to say: 'Listen to Me.' When He desires it He *makes* them stand and listen to Him, even when they are hurrying Him on to His crucifixion.

Ah! this is He who made the human heart. He handles it as He wills. He knows all its emotions, He rules over it, and can command it. By the power of His will not only individuals, but whole nations obey Him.

As soon as Jesus ceases speaking the procession again moves on towards Calvary, for it is on the summit of that hill that He will sacrifice His life for the salvation of men. It was in the Temple of Solomon, built on the *side* of a mountain, that the priests descended from Aaron offered their sacrifices. Jesus Christ climbs to the *top* of the mountain to offer *His* Sacrifice, in order to show that it is from His Sacrifice as from their source that the ancient sacrifices drew their efficacy. It was in view of His Sacrifice that the former sacrifices were agreeable to God, and now His

Sacrifice is to abolish them. Also, Calvary was chosen as the place for the Immolation of Jesus because it was there that Adam, the first sinner, was buried, according to tradition. The second Adam, Jesus Christ, ascends the Mount of Calvary to give life to the ashes of Adam and all Adam's descendants. From the ashes of the old Adam, mingled with His own precious Blood, the Man-God will make, as it were, a new slime to form other men, who will be imitators of the new Adam. On this Mount of Calvary the malice of the first Adam will be destroyed by the effects of the grace of this second Adam, who is the Son of Man, and this same grace will flow over all regenerated humanity. It is, then, on the summit of the mountain that we see more clearly than anywhere else that Jesus is the Redeemer of men, that He is the Man-God.

Having reached Calvary, the executioners set to work to make all ready for crucifying Our Saviour. They now offer Him to drink some wine mingled with gall, not so much to refresh and strengthen Him as to add still more to His sufferings. This is the fulfilment of the prophecy: 'And they gave Me gall for My food' (Ps. lxviii. 22). Jesus allows them to put it to His lips, but 'when He had tasted He would not drink'—*Cum gustasset, noluit bibere* (St. Matt. xxvii. 34). He would receive no outward help to nourish and sustain Him; in His own power He had sufficient strength for the work He had

to do. Therefore, having tasted it—for there was no bitterness or pain He did not experience and taste in His Passion—He put it from Him, and would not drink it.

After Our Saviour is offered this draught the great and terrible crucifixion commences. The Cross is laid on the ground, the nails and hammers are brought; all is ready. Jesus lays Himself on the Cross, the executioners seize His Hands and His Feet, and placing a nail in each Hand and Foot they strike with all their force. Blow follows blow; the nail passes through the flesh, pierces nerves and sinews, and at length Jesus is nailed to the Cross. Who can describe what He suffers? The angels themselves can form no idea of it. Oh, see how He manifests in His sufferings that He is God!

The executioners raise the Cross, and drop it into the hole which has been made to receive it. Jesus, hanging by the nails, between heaven and earth, suffers now more acutely than ever. Covered with wounds, pierced and bleeding, He is in very truth the Man of Sorrows. His Blood flows from all parts of His Body, and on the hard bed of the Cross He has nowhere to lay His Head. Oh, all you who deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ come here, to this Cross, whereon hangs the Man of Sorrows! Gaze on Him; look from the crown of His Head to the soles of His Feet. Is it not true that He is no longer a Man? Is He not reduced to the condition of a leper?

Christian, behold your God! Can *you* recognise Him? Read the title that Pilate has caused to be nailed over His Head on the cross: *Jesus Nazarenus, Rex Judæorum* ('Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews') (St. John xx. 19). The Jews themselves placed this title on the cross. They were obliged to, in spite of their repugnance and their hatred of Jesus. It was Pilate who made them do this – Pilate the coward, the weak judge, who could not maintain his own opinion and follow his conscience by letting Jesus go free after asserting His innocence.

It is St. John who tells us of this circumstance, of the Title on the Cross, and he was present when the soldiers came and nailed it over Our Saviour's Head. Pilate had said to the people when he brought Jesus out on to the balcony of his palace: 'Behold the Man!' A little later, sitting in his judgment-seat, he said, pointing to Jesus: 'Behold your King!' The Jews had roared with rage on hearing these words, and had answered: 'We have no King but Cæsar. If thou release this Man thou art not Cæsar's friend.' These shouts of the Jews had so terrified Pilate that he committed his last act of cowardice, and condemned Jesus to death, after having declared Him 'innocent,' and after calling Him 'King of the Jews.'

It was Pilate's duty to write the title that was to be fixed to the Cross of Jesus. This title was supposed to give the dying man's name and the

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real motive of his condemnation. What does Pilate write? '*Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.*' The Jews read this title, and they tell Pilate he must alter it. Instead of 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews,' they tell him to write 'Jesus of Nazareth, who said He was King of the Jews'—*Noli scribere, Rex Judæorum: sed quia ipse dixit: Rex sum Judæorum* (St. John xix. 21). What does Pilate do? In the interest of his reputation, to cover his injustice, and to show that he was proud of having condemned Jesus, ought he not to have made the alteration they demanded? However, he is firm. He decides the title shall remain as he has written it—*Quod scripsi, scripsi* (St. John xix. 22). He said to them publicly, 'Behold your King,' and now he writes: 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.' He will not alter it; all their efforts to make him rewrite it are useless. They beg, plead, threaten; but no, Pilate, the weak, the cowardly judge, is inflexible—*Quod scripsi, scripsi.*

How is it that we find him so obstinate, so firm, so determined in this circumstance? Is it to please Jesus Christ? He has nothing to hope from a Man who will be dead in a few hours. It is not from political or worldly interests, nor from firmness of character, that Pilate shows himself so inflexible on this point. Whence, then, comes this determined firmness? It is the Hand of God that directs the hand of Pilate

to write this inscription. In this instance the cowardly judge is Divinely inspired and Divinely assisted. 'It is by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit,' says St Laurence Justinian ('De Christi Agone'), 'that Pilate wrote the title on the Cross.' And St Augustine also says that an inner Voice spoke silently but firmly to Pilate when he wrote the title, and also when he refused to alter it (Tract 17, 'In S. Joan.').

According to the Divine designs, the Messias was to be publicly proclaimed King of the Jews. We know that shortly after the birth of Our Saviour the Magi sought for Him as 'King of the Jews' in the city of Jerusalem and at the Court of Herod. Jesus had also said publicly that He was this promised King expected by the Jews. What has been once said by Him cannot be effaced. St. Augustine says: *Ideo Pilatus, quod scripsit scripsit, quia Dominus quod dixit dixit.* Jesus Christ has spoken. Pilate must speak as He did. Jesus has said He is King of the Jews; Pilate must repeat it over His cross.

This title, written in three languages, must remain unchanged, because before Pilate wrote it Jesus had spoken it with His own lips. This title, 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews,' will proclaim to men in all ages that Jesus Christ is the longed-for Messias, the promised Redeemer, the Man-God.

ACT OF REPARATION.

Now, O my dearest Lord, I can read over Thy cross the true title of Thy dignity. Now I need no more inquire of Thy Apostle St. Peter whether Thou art the Son of God, nor need I seek the testimony of Thy beloved disciple, who rested so fondly near Thy Heart. I need but raise my eyes to the cross on which Thou dost hang, and I find there, written by the same hand that signed Thy condemnation to death, 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.' These words alone, which all the rage of Thy enemies could not alter, tell me plainly that Thou art the Messias, promised and longed for, that Thou art the Redeemer and Saviour of the human race. Now I will bring to Thy cross all those who deny Thy Divinity. I will invite them to read the words written there by Pilate. Read, O unbelievers, read what Pilate wrote—read the title on the cross of Jesus. This title will tell you that Jesus is the Son of God.

I bow my head before Thy title, O my Divine Saviour. I prostrate myself before Thee, and I rejoice to find in Thee the King of the Jews, the same Man-God whom the Wise Men adored in the Cave of Bethlehem. Strengthen my faith I beseech Thee, and also send down a ray of light and heat into the frozen and blinded hearts of all those men who, like the Jews, dare to deny Thy Divinity.

Perchance Thou wilt see some obstacles to Thy

Love in their hardened hearts, but I know that among Thy treasures Thou hast graces that can conquer the most obstinate hearts. These graces, then, I beg of Thee for these unfortunate sinners, and I implore this by the merits of Thy most sorrowful Passion and by the love Thou dost bear Mary, Thy Virgin Mother, to whom Thou canst refuse nothing.

O Immaculate Virgin, I conjure thee, by thy maternal love, ask thy Divine Son to pardon the insults offered to Him by unfortunate sinners. Obtain for these poor creatures, I beseech thee, the grace that their hearts be softened in order that they may turn at last and walk in the way of salvation.

CHAPTER XII

JESUS ON THE CROSS, HUMILIATED AND INSULTED. MANIFESTATIONS OF HIS DIVINITY

JESUS is attached to the Cross on which He must die, but before He expires we will see how gloriously His Divinity shines forth amidst the humiliations and insults heaped upon Him in His agony.

The Redeemer of the human race was promised to humanity when Adam, the first man, sinned. This Redeemer was to atone for the sins of men, and was to appease the Divine wrath in a *sensible* and *efficacious* manner. To accomplish the Redemption in a sensible manner, it was necessary for Him to be a *Man ;* to accomplish it in an efficacious manner it was necessary for Him to be *God*. He must, therefore, be a Man-God. This Man-God was expected under the name of 'the Messias.' The prophets announced this Messias, and told of the circumstances of His Life, and Israel gave this Messias the title of 'King of the Jews.' This title was heard on earth at the birth of Our Saviour, and we find it now on the cross whereon Jesus is about to die. The Jews use all their efforts to have it changed,

but we have seen that on this point Pilate is inflexible, even though he thereby incurs the anger and hatred of the Jews. The title, then, remains, and it tells all men that this Man over whose head it rests is the King of the Jews, the expected Messias, the Redeemer of the world.

A great deal of what the prophets foretold concerning this Redeemer is already accomplished, but there still remain some prophecies to be fulfilled.

It was necessary that all that had been foretold concerning the Messias should be accomplished, in order that we might have full and complete proof of His Divinity, and now on Calvary the remaining prophecies will be fulfilled.

In the Prætorium of Pilate Jesus was compared with Barabbas, and Barabbas was preferred before Him. The murderer was liberated, and Jesus was condemned. But it was not sufficient that Jesus should be condemned to the death of the cross. There was, also, a prophecy which said that the Messias should be 'reputed with the wicked' (Isa. liii. 12). This was, indeed, accomplished on Calvary, and it was the Jews themselves who arranged for its fulfilment. Two notorious thieves, who had spent their lives in crime, had been condemned to death, and to the death of the cross. These two men were sent to Calvary with Jesus, they were crucified at the same time as He was, and when the crosses were raised, that of Jesus was placed in the centre, to show

the people that Our Saviour was the greatest malefactor of the three. Behold Him, then, 'reputed with sinners!' And this was done, as St. Mark tells us, that the prophecy might be fulfilled — *Cum eo crucifixerunt duos latrones, unum a dextris et alium a sinistris ejus, et impleta est scriptura quæ dicit: et cum iniquis reputatus est* (St. Mark xv. 27, 28). This humiliation which they inflict upon Our Saviour accomplishes a prophecy which proves that Jesus is the true Messias, the promised Redeemer.

Nor was this the only prophecy spoken of the Messias that was accomplished on Calvary in the Person of Our Saviour. Among Our Saviour's garments was one that was made for Him by His Blessed Mother when He was a child, and which — according to Euthymius and other Fathers of the Church—grew with His growth, and never wore out. It was seamless, and was woven of one thread throughout. What became of this seamless garment of Jesus on Calvary? In it another of the prophecies concerning the Messias will be fulfilled, and thus it will give us another proof that Jesus is the promised Redeemer, the Son of God. The prophet David said, speaking, as it were, by the mouth of the Messias: 'They have parted My garments amongst them, and upon My vesture they cast lots' (Ps. xxi. 19). This prophecy also is fulfilled on Calvary. Four soldiers have nailed Jesus to the cross. At the foot of the cross are the garments

which the soldiers divide between them. But how will they divide them? According to the prophecy, and not otherwise. They will do it in an exceptional manner, for they belong to an exceptional Person. The outer garments they divide equally, each soldier taking his portion—*Acceperunt vestimenta ejus et fecerunt quatuor partes unicuique militi partem* (St. John xix. 23). The seamless robe, woven without a join, must not be divided. In spite of their avarice and their cruelty they feel, by one of those inspirations they do not understand, that this robe must remain intact, so they say one to the other: 'Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it whose it shall be' (St. John xix. 24). Behold here the fulfilment of the prophecy. 'Be not surprised,' says St. Athanasius, 'that it has all happened thus, because, apart from this prophecy which was fulfilled, the seamless robe was a figure of Jesus Christ, who wore it day and night through all His mortal life. It represented Him as a work of one indivisible texture—a perfect work of the Holy Spirit; a work which cannot be destroyed by the hand of man, nor by the power of hell; a work made of one thread, of which the highest part is the Divinity, the lowest part the Humanity—and yet seamless. This vesture cannot be torn, not by the hatred of the Jews nor by the avarice of the soldiers, not by the impiety of men nor by the rage of demons; and it shows that He who wore it, though He was nailed to the

cross, was, in truth, the Word come down from Heaven, the 'Word made flesh' (*Verbum caro factum*), the Word who is indivisible from the Father, and who is inseparable from the Humanity which He assumed in the womb of the holy and spotless Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Ghost. Let not the impious unbelievers of our day flatter themselves that they can tear by their taunts and blasphemies this vesture without seam of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Let them not imagine that they can separate in Jesus Christ what the Holy Spirit has united in Him in so indissoluble a manner. Let them at least say with the soldiers, *Non scindamus eam*. Let them acknowledge, on the contrary, that in Jesus Christ two natures are united—the Divine nature and the human nature. Let them not say that He is God and not Man, nor that He is Man and not God. On either side there will be error, blasphemy, and danger to themselves. 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,' says St. Leo. 'Thou art the Word of Life. Those who believe this Word will have life; those who deny it will have hell eternally' (Sermon 3, 'In Anniv. Assump. Suæ'). But again there is a third prophecy which refers to Jesus Christ, and which was fulfilled on Calvary to prove His Divinity. The prophet-king had said in the name of the Messias: 'All they that saw Me have laughed Me to scorn; they have spoken with the lips and wagged the head. They have

said, He hoped in the Lord, let Him deliver Him' (Ps. xxi. 8, 9). The prophet Jeremias had also said (Lam. ii. 15, 16), speaking of the Messias: 'All they that passed by the way have clapped their hands at Thee; they have wagged their heads. . . . All Thy enemies have opened their mouth against Thee.' Here, in truth, these prophecies are fulfilled. Whilst Our Saviour suffers excruciating pain on the Cross all those who stand round mock Him, and cover Him with insults and humiliations. After having exercised their hatred on His Body, they crucify His Soul by adding sorrow to sorrow. They vie with each other in cruelty, they puzzle their brains to add to His sufferings, they insult Him with vile gestures and infamous gibes; in fine, they pour on Him the torrent of insults which the prophets saw in vision. The passers-by taunt Him: 'Vah! Thou that destroyest the Temple of God, and in three days dost rebuild it, save Thyself!' Others add: 'He saved others, Himself He cannot save.' These mockers mix with the soldiers and mingle with the crowd to incite them to insult Jesus. The fury and confusion becomes general; the chief priests themselves—and the ancients, the Scribes and the Pharisees, and all the people compete with each other in heaping shame and insult on the Dying Saviour. They pay no heed to the two thieves who hang on either side of Him; all their attention is turned on Jesus. All the bitter-

ness of their tongues, all their venomous glances, all their cutting taunts, all their scoffs and sneers, are reserved for Him ; and again and again they jeer at Him in His agony : 'If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the Cross' (St. Matt. xxvii. 40). 'Come down from the Cross and we will believe in Thee.' Why does Jesus not come down from the Cross? St. Augustine tells us : 'Simply because He *is* God.' God cannot contradict Himself. God cannot turn back on a work He has once undertaken. Jesus Christ could have descended from the Cross. He could have worked this prodigy. He could have cured His wounds and sores, as He did three days after when He rose from the dead. But He will not perform this miracle now ; it would have destroyed all the others that He had worked in proof of His Divinity. By this miracle, which the Jews demanded so persistently and so insolently, He would have delayed the great work He had undertaken—the Work of Redemption, which He was now consummating on the Cross. He was raised on the Cross because He willed it. He remained there because He willed it, and He remained there as long as He willed. The great miracle, which proved that He was God, *was* that He remained there.

But wait ! What do these cries and taunts of the Jews signify ? These arrows of cruelty which they aim at Jesus cannot be the natural outcome of their hatred of Him. It is incon-

ceivable that civilized men should carry their insults and cruelty towards a dying sufferer so far, when His pitiable state ought rather to rouse their sympathy and compassion. What the Jews now do is not by their natural instinct ; it is rather that they are acting at the instigation of Satan. As St. Bruno d'Asti says : *Hæc verba non ex se, sed diabolico afflatu dicebant Judæi.* It is the demons who speak by the mouths of the Jews, because the infernal spirits already feel the power of the Blood of Jesus, which weakens *their* power and destroys their kingdom.

From His Cross Our Saviour sees the efforts that Hell is making against Him. He sees that it is these reprobate spirits who urge the Jews to cry, 'Come down from the Cross,' that thus the Redemption of the world may be prevented. But Jesus remains on His Cross ; He remains there as the God who, of His own free will, began the work of Redemption, and who will complete it to the shame of His enemies and to the confusion of Hell.

Nor are these all the prophecies which are fulfilled on Calvary, whereby the Divinity of Jesus is manifested. The prophet Joel, predicting the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, said to the Jews (ii. 10): 'The earth hath trembled, the heavens are moved, the sun and moon are darkened.' Also, the prophet Amos, in foretelling the destruction of

the kingdom of Israel, said (viii. 9): 'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the sun shall go down at mid-day, and I will make the earth dark in the day of light.'

These prophecies were all fulfilled on the day of the death of Jesus Christ—on the day when Divine Justice decided, finally, the entire destruction of the Jews, because they had put the seal on their iniquities by the deicide they committed that day on the Hill of Calvary.

Three hours before Our Divine Saviour's death all nature was disturbed. The light of day departed, and became dark as night; the sun was enveloped in darkness; the largest and strongest rocks were rent; the earth trembled to its very centre, and groaned as though guilty of some awful crime. In the Temple of Jerusalem all is in confusion. The great veil which hung before the Holy of Holies is rent from the top even to the bottom. Consternation, fear, terror is written on every face. Even they who are most bitter against Our Saviour are terror-stricken and quaking with fear. The panic is at its height, when suddenly the graves open, and the dead come forth. Is this, then, the Day of the Lord? Is the Day of the Last Judgment come? Who has roused these creatures and caused them to act in this unusual manner? It is the Conqueror of the World, the Conqueror of Hell—He whom all creatures obey. It is

Jesus, who suffers on the Cross, who agonizes, who dies on this infamous gibbet for the salvation of the whole world. It is Jesus, who would not descend from the Cross in spite of the defiant insults of the Jews, because from His Cross, while enduring the most intense agony, He prepared other prodigies which would, equally, manifest that He was God. In the midst of His sufferings He commands the sun, and the sun is eclipsed; He commands the light, and the light is darkened; He commands the rocks, and the rocks are broken; He commands the earth, and the earth trembles; He commands the graves, and the graves open and give forth their dead. He will work a yet greater miracle than these last. Behold, 'the multitude of them that were come together to that sight and saw the things that were done, returned striking their breasts' (St. Luke xxiii. 48). The centurion himself and those under him, watching Jesus, cried with one accord: 'Indeed, this was the Son of God' (St. Matt. xxvii. 54).

Jesus Christ has been acknowledged Son of God on Calvary as in the stable of Bethlehem; He has been acknowledged Son of God in the midst of humiliations and insults; He has been acknowledged Son of God by those very enemies who ascended Calvary only to augment His sufferings by their cruelty; He has been acknowledged Son of God at the instant when the demons of hell were most infuriated against

Him. Let us, then, with bowed heads and contrite hearts, repeat: 'Indeed, this Man is the Son of God' (*Vere Filius Dei erat Iste*).

ACT OF REPARATION.

From Calvary's heights, O my Saviour, the multitudes proclaim that Thou art truly the Son of God. Who, indeed, can doubt it? The very hills take up the cry and echo back: *Vere Filius Dei erat Iste*. And yet are there still in the world men who dare to deny this truth. Why, Lord, even they who nailed Thee to the Cross strike their breasts and with groans and tears cease not to proclaim that Thou art the Son of God and yet these men even now dare deny it! O Lord, the infidels of our time have, indeed, sinned grievously in denying Thy Divinity, but they can yet make reparation. 'Go,' I will say to them—'go to Calvary and join yourselves to the penitents there, and with tears in your eyes and sorrow in your hearts cast yourselves at the foot of the cross, and say: *Vere Filius Dei erat Iste*. And who but Thou, O Lord, art strong enough and great enough to touch the criminal heart? Look not to their sins, I pray Thee, but look to Thine own mercies, by which Thou art pleased to draw to Thy loving Heart Thy wayward, straying sheep. Look at the love Thou bearest Thy holy Mother Mary. Listen to the prayers that, in the tenderness

of her heart, she makes to Thee for these unfortunate sinners, and for her sake have pity on them. Receive her prayers in expiation for their blasphemy, and reinstate these poor souls in the path of justice, in order that one day in Heaven they may thank Thee for the mercy Thou didst show them when they were on earth. Amen.

CHAPTER XIII

THE THREE FIRST WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE CROSS. HOW THEY SHOW US HIS DIVINITY

JESUS said to His Apostles one day a little before His Passion: 'Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the Scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death. And He shall be delivered to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified' (St. Matt. xx. 18, 19).

All these things have come to pass, and now Jesus is on the summit of Calvary, nailed to the Cross. It is the death He chose for Himself, being the most cruel and agonizing death imaginable. 'He chose it,' says St. Augustine, 'so that the martyrs who would follow Him might have courage to ascend the cross reserved for them, which would be less terrible than that of their Master.' The Cross on which Our Saviour hangs is the altar where He offers the Sacrifice—the Great Sacrifice—for the salvation of mankind. He is, at the same time, Priest and Victim. But besides being His altar, the Cross is also His pulpit, from which He will preach to

us. It will be the tribunal from which He will pronounce His judgments.

He is about to speak, and in sorrowful silence let us listen to His words, in order that He may instruct us, and at the same time our faith in His Divinity will increase.

After the long and profound silence that Jesus has maintained in the midst of His tortures, He opens His dying lips to pray aloud. In spite of His painful agony and His extreme weakness, His senses retain a miraculous vitality. He raises His weary eyelids, and casts a long and beseeching look on all around Him. Nearly all who surround Him are His bitter enemies. He hears everywhere horrible imprecations and gross blasphemies; the hills re-echo with them, and they rise to the sky, as though to hasten the effects of Divine Vengeance, prepared for these guilty, sinful men. He hears the words that pass from mouth to mouth: 'If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the Cross.' Raising His Eyes and His Heart to Heaven, He addresses His Father. He prays for pardon for His wandering sin-laden children: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do'—*Pater, dimitte illis, non enim sciunt quid faciunt* (St. Luke xxiii. 34).

This is the dying prayer of the Man-God.

He must, indeed, be God and the Son of God. He must have an infinite compassion to make a prayer more sublime than the world has ever

heard until now—a prayer so full of blessing for those who are putting Him to death. As St. Bernard says: *Verbum benedictionis super inimicos suos, quod a sæculo non est auditum, effudit O Verbum summi Patris Verbo conveniens* ('Tract. de Pass. Dom.,' 47). '*Father, forgive them.*' Yes, this prayer introduces a new language, such as the world has never heard—*A sæculo non est auditum.* It is the language of Him who is the Word of God—*Verbum summi Patris Verbo conveniens.* In course of time there will be men and women who will speak this language, but they will be the disciples who have learnt this lesson from their Master. They will be Christians who have caught the dying accents of the Man-God. And what need had He to pray aloud? Without doubt He does so that we may know that it is the Son of God who prays. He addresses God as His 'Father.' This same Heavenly Father, who a short time before had called Him His 'well-beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased'—this same Father receives His prayer, and the Son addresses Him with firm assurance of being heard. And He is heard, *pro sua reverentia*—'on account of His reverence' (Heb. v. 7).

'*Father, forgive them*'—as though He would say: 'My Father, I have already forgiven these My enemies who have outraged Me and steeped Me in bitterness, I have pardoned them lovingly and willingly, but I desire also that Thou, in

Thy turn, shouldst pardon them. O Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Raise, O My Father, the mists from their eyes, and let them see My Divinity. Pardon them, O My Father, pardon them.'

Scarcely has this prayer ascended to Heaven than the clouds of unbelief pass from before their eyes. On all sides the cry is heard, midst weeping and lamentation: 'Truly this was the Son of God.' Ask not the cause of this sudden transformation in so many hearts hardened with crime. What cause, what reason can there be but the Divinity of Jesus?—that Divinity which, as St. Paul says, reconciled us to God—*Deus erat in Christo mundum reconcilians sibi* (2 Cor. v. 14). Thus it is the Divinity of Christ that prays from the Throne of the Cross. This Prayer of Jesus is immediately answered in the heart of one of the two thieves who are crucified beside Him. Until now these thieves have joined in the insults and blasphemies hurled at Our Divine Lord (St. Matt. xxvii. 44); but all of a sudden the thief on the right—Dismas—turns to Jesus, and noticing His patience and meekness in His sufferings, enters into himself, and wonders who this Man can be. The thief on the left continues his blasphemies. After the prayer of Jesus, Dismas is changed and converted. From a brutal, violent, blasphemous criminal he becomes a gentle, resigned, and suppliant penitent. He becomes even an Apostle, and

defends Our Saviour. His companion turns to Jesus and taunts Him, saying: 'If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us' (St. Luke xxiii. 39). Full of zeal for the glory of God, Dismas says to his companion: 'Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation,' and he adds: 'And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, *but this Man hath done no evil*' (*ibid.*). Jesus is here acknowledged innocent by one of the thieves crucified beside Him. It is the same avowal as Pilate made; the same as Judas made. It is more than an acknowledgment of His innocence, it is a profession of His Divinity. 'Neither dost thou fear God, seeing that thou art under the same condemnation.' So firmly persuaded is this thief that Jesus is God that he turns to Him at once with a humble, contrite, and suppliant heart, and says to Him: 'Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom' (St. Luke xxiii. 42). He calls Him *Lord*, and acknowledges Him as *King* who is about to enter His Kingdom, and He addresses His prayer to Him as *God*.

'He sees Him on the Cross, and he petitions Him as though He was sitting in Heaven,' says St. John Chrysostom. 'He sees Him condemned, and he invokes Him as King. He sees Him in torments, and he adores Him as though He was in glory. He does not say, "*If* Thou art God, deliver me from this death," but he says, "*Be-*

cause Thou art God, deliver me from Thy future judgments." '

The prayer of the good thief, this prayer so humble, so full of faith, of hope, and of love, could not fail to be heard. Jesus hears it, and He knows the heart of the humble suppliant. Not only does He pardon him, but He turns to him and answers him lovingly: 'Amen I say to thee, this day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise' —*Amen dico tibi, hodie mecum eris in Paradiso* (St. Luke xxiii. 43). But who is this Man, scorned and despised by all, covered with wounds, crowned with thorns, nailed to a Cross, who, even in the very presence of His enemies and executioners, promises this thief the pardon of his transgressions and a place of rest and crown of glory? Who is He Who, on the point of expiring as the greatest of malefactors, promises to this penitent criminal that He will admit him this very day, in His own company, to a place of joy and happiness? This Man must, in very truth, be God. 'Only God,' says St. Leo, 'can make such promises.' The promise here made by Jesus Christ exceeds all human power. No; this promise is not a word falling from the cross of a guilty criminal; it is a sentence descending from the throne of an infinitely just and powerful God. On this occasion the Cross of Jesus becomes a throne, from the height of which He exercises His Divine power. He absolves, with His own authority, the penitent thief. He

pardons him all the crimes he has committed; He enriches him with His graces, and He assures him that in a short time He will lead him into rest and glory. Only a God could make such promises, and, what is more, only a God could fulfil them. But according to the prophets this Messias, Lord, and King was to be also a Judge. 'He shall judge the world with justice, and the people with His truth' (Ps. xcv. 13). The Title over the Cross proclaims His royalty; the place which His Cross occupies between the two thieves declares Him to be *Judge*, and furnishes Him with opportunity of exercising His jurisdiction. The Cross was His tribunal, as St. Augustine says: *Crux Christi in medio non fuit supplicium sed tribunal.* It is from this tribunal that He exercises His Almighty Judgment. He judges the faith of the good thief and the rebellious incredulity of the bad thief. He absolves the one and condemns the other.

He shows Himself the Arbiter of life and death, the absolute Dispenser of justice and of mercy, and, in a word, He shows Himself to be the Man-God, who judges the living and the dead, as St. Peter said (Acts x. 42): 'He was appointed by God to be Judge of the living and of the dead.' It is on the Cross that the exercise of His judicial power begins, and He will put the supreme seal to it on the last day in the Valley of Josaphat.

This is, then, the second word that Jesus Christ pronounces on His Cross, which proves His Divinity in a new way. His third word He addresses to Mary, His most holy Mother, and to St. John, His beloved disciple. Mary and John are at the foot of the Cross, all absorbed in meditation on the great mystery of the Redemption of mankind which Jesus is effecting in the midst of the most heartrending sufferings. Mary especially is ravished in contemplating the immense love with which her Divine Son is suffering for the salvation of the world. Never did her Son appear to her more surely God than in the midst of those torments endured with such loving patience; never did her Jesus seem more worthy of love than in the midst of such hatred gratified by so many and such great outrages. Her maternal heart goes forth to Him more than ever, and Her love for Jesus increases to such a degree as to attain a height quite inaccessible to the rest of men. 'Oh, if only she could be fastened to the Cross, to die crucified with her Son!' How willingly would she not have suffered this! A thousand times she repeats in her heart these sweet words, '*My Son Jesus!*' and each time her love for Jesus is increased and intensified. Each instant the flame of her love becomes more ardent; her heart is as a furnace, blazing with love for Jesus, and all the waves of the cold malice of the Jews, which surge unceasingly around the Divine Victim, far from

cooling it, serve rather to augment the heat and brilliancy of that flame.

This is the loving disposition of Mary's heart on Calvary when Jesus' dying eyes rest on her and then on the disciple by her side. Wishing, so to speak, to compensate her for the loss she is sustaining in losing Him, her only Son, Our Saviour gives her all men for her children in the person of St. John, saying to her: 'Woman, behold thy son.' Then, addressing the disciple, He says to him: 'Behold thy Mother!' (*Ecce filius tuus! . . . Ecce Mater tua!*). He wishes to say to Mary: 'Woman, I see the immense love with which you love Me; henceforth consecrate your love to the children of My Church, represented in the person of John. In the person of this disciple I confide to you My Church and her children. I put them in My place—they will be your children; love them as faithfully as you have loved Me. *Ecce filius tuus!* You have not begotten them according to nature, but I give you, by the power of My Word, the feelings of a mother, which you have not naturally towards them, and I name you their Mother. From henceforth you are their Mother—*Ecce filius tuus!*'

These words impress themselves on Mary's heart; they effect what they signify; they give Mary the real feelings of a mother in our regard, and from that moment never has she ceased—never will she cease—to love and protect the

Church, to love and protect her children, to love them and protect them in all places. On all sides we see unceasingly the prodigies which Mary performs on behalf of the children of her adoption. It is nineteen hundred years since those prodigies began ; they continue in our own day numerous and radiant, and they will continue to the end of time. This continual prodigy, this permanent prodigy, this prodigy of all ages, this daily prodigy, had its birth in the words which the crucified Jesus uttered from His Cross : 'Woman, behold thy son!' This Jesus Christ who has pronounced them, and in pronouncing them made a new creation incomparably more noble than the first—this Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God ; it is He by whom all things were made.

Jesus addresses Himself also to St. John. He gives him Mary for his Mother in these beautiful words : *Ecce Mater tua* ('Behold thy Mother'), and in giving her to him Jesus gave His Mother also to all men. In this we can see the Divinity of Jesus shine forth in yet another light. Jesus addresses these words to St. John immediately after He had addressed His words to Mary. He utters them on His bed of suffering, from the height of His Cross. These words, then, ought to have the same wonderful force as the first. Let us fathom this new mystery.

At the moment Our Divine Saviour speaks thus to St. John He is exercising towards us the

greatest act of charity of which *even He* is capable —in giving His life for the salvation of men. In the strength of that love He loves His Mother more intensely than ever, and He longs to make her beloved by others. What, then, does He do? From His Divine Heart He drops into the heart of St. John one spark of His filial love for Mary. St. John at the foot of the Cross represents the Church and her faithful children, and Jesus says to him, indicating Mary by His look, 'Behold thy Mother!' As if He had said: 'Behold Mary! I wish her to be your Mother. As her child love her as I have always loved her; respect her as I have always respected her; honour her as I have always honoured her, and as I honour her at this solemn moment. I give you the heart of a son towards her, and engrave all filial sentiments on your heart. Communicate them to My whole Church and her children so that the Church and her children may, without ceasing, until the end of time, recount the glories of My Mother, imitate her virtues, honour her person, respect her, love her, place their confidence in her, and invoke her intercession in all their necessities. Be a worthy son of a Mother so worthy. '*Ecce Mater tua!*' These feelings of a son for Mary were engraven in the heart of St. John. From his heart they were communicated to the whole Church and to all her true children. These sentiments have traversed nineteen centuries, and we find them equally

warm and lively in the hearts of the faithful who succeed each other from generation to generation. One might almost say that an angel from Heaven passes over the universe incessantly, indicating Mary, and repeating continually: 'Children of men, behold your Mother.' But no, it is no angel; it is God Himself; it is Jesus Christ crucified who has said these words from the Cross. Pronounced by the all-powerful Voice of the Being belonging to Heaven and earth, these words resound throughout the whole Catholic world, saying continually to the Church and her children, 'Behold your Mother!' and the Church gives back the eternal response by her filial love for Mary. This is the explanation of that love so ancient, so constant, so tender, and so effective that the Church cherishes for Mary. Search history, and you will find the Apostolic Fathers themselves, the Fathers of the first ages of the Church—St. Denis, St. Ignatius, St. Epiphanius, and others—all excel in devotion and love of Mary. Search history, and you will find Popes and Bishops, you will find General Councils and National Councils, you will find Fathers and Doctors, Religious Institutions and Military Orders, Universities and Colleges—all these you will find always distinguished by their respect and love for Mary. They sing her praises and celebrate her glory; they spread her devotion and propagate her honour; they defend her privileges and extol her greatness. Read—read

the Fathers ; you will see with what tenderness, with what zeal, with what enthusiasm, with what love they speak of her and all that concerns her. Mary is the object of their science ; Mary is the delicate and vibrating fibre of their eloquence ; they speak with their whole heart when they speak of Mary. And what do we see in the bosom of the Church ? Altars, chapels, churches, cathedrals—without number they are dedicated to Mary. We celebrate the numerous feasts which the Church has instituted in Mary's honour ; we have the pious practices which she has established to venerate Mary ; we recite the loving prayers composed to invoke Mary ; we sing the magnificent titles bestowed on Mary telling of her greatness, and in these litanies the name of Mary is found so close to that of Jesus. Each month can claim feasts in honour of Mary ; each week has one day set apart as Mary's day ; each day the Church calls frequently on Mary, and seldom do we recite the *Pater Noster* without adding the *Ave Maria*.

Glancing at the different Catholic nations, and passing from one extremity of the world to the other, we find that every people and every nation, every kingdom, city, town, village and hamlet, all have a special and local devotion to Mary, and all have the same heart which beats for her—a filial heart. Everywhere the faithful have recourse to Mary as their Mother. In their spiritual as well as in their temporal necessities

they invoke Mary. People and clergy, princes and subjects, men and women, young and old, always and everywhere invoke Mary's aid in their necessities. The mariner invokes her in the tempest, and calls her 'Star of the Sea.' The sick man on his bed of pain appeals to her as 'health of the sick'; the poor in their distress, and the afflicted in their trouble, turn to her as 'comfort of the afflicted.' The private man in his troubles, and the warrior on the battlefield, lean on her as the impregnable tower. The just invoke her that they may persevere in justice; the sinner calls on her to help him to overcome his bad habits and break from the bondage of sin. No true child of the Church allows a day to pass without raising up his heart with filial love to Mary, and saying, 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.' Most other devotions grow cold in time; devotion to Mary always increases. Her love can never weary; it becomes more and more firm among the faithful; it takes root in their hearts and fructifies; it ceases not when death calls the soul to receive its reward in the world to come. Now, this filial sentiment towards Mary, this feeling so ancient, so universal, so constant, so deep and so tender—whence does it come? It is not a result of human industry; it is not the effect of individual zeal or united action. To find the true origin of this devotion we must go back to Calvary. The word that Jesus spoke on the Cross, *Ecce Mater tua!—this*

is the fount whence all true love of Mary has sprung. This it is that has given to the Church and to her children a filial heart towards Mary. This word, which works so universal a prodigy, which acts so constantly and naturally in the hearts of all Catholics on the face of the earth—this word shows us clearly that He who spoke it, who was the Founder of the Church, is in very truth the Son of God.

ACT OF REPARATION.

O Divine Jesus, who can fathom the goodness of Thy Heart? Only Thou Thyself canst do this. Thy enemies have done all the evil in their power against Thee. They have dragged Thee backwards and forwards through the streets of Jerusalem; they have scourged Thee, crowned Thee with thorns, and accused Thee unjustly; they have demanded Thy death, and nailed Thee to the Cross. They have hurled in Thy Face all manner of insults, and after all these outrages, after all that terrible treatment, what vengeance dost Thou take, O adorable Saviour? Ah! plainly can we see that Thou art truly the Saviour of men, and that only with regret dost Thou decide to punish when men force Thee to do so by their repeated iniquities. After all the ignominies and affronts Thou showest the goodness of Thy Heart. Thou dost even make excases for sinners, and beg Thy Father to pardon

them. Thou dost promise immediate reward to the thief crucified with Thee, who, although he first joined with Thy enemies in insulting Thee, afterwards repented and turned to Thee. Thou dost offer to Thy Heavenly Father the merits of Thy dolorous Passion in expiation for sin. I pray Thee, my Jesus, offer again these Thy merits on behalf of so many sinners who offend Thee in these days, and above all offer them for those who deny Thy Divinity in the incredulity of their malicious hearts. Repeat in their favour those beautiful words which Thou didst utter with so much love on Calvary : ' Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

And thou, O Mary, my dearest Mother, repeat thyself those touching words with your Divine Son, and show thyself to be a tender and compassionate Mother to these poor sinners, who in their blind ignorance outrage Thy Son and thee by their crimes.

CHAPTER XIV

FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH WORDS OF OUR LORD FROM THE CROSS. WHAT THEY TELL US OF HIS DIVINITY

THE agony of Jesus continues, and the hour of His Death draws nigh. His Sacrifice is almost completed, but the Divine Sufferer has still a few words He would speak, in order to instruct His children and to convince all men that He is really the Son of God.

In this chapter we will consider the fourth, fifth, and sixth words, reserving the last word for the next chapter.

Jesus has implored pardon for His enemies; He has promised Paradise to the penitent thief; He has left Mary as Mother to the Church; and now He addresses Himself to His Heavenly Father, crying with a loud voice: '*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*' (St. Mark xv. 34).

'This is not a complaint that He utters,' says St. Leo; 'it is a lesson He would teach us.' In the Garden of Olives Our Saviour had prayed His Heavenly Father to remove from Him the chalice of His Passion. This prayer, which came

partly from the weakness of His Flesh, was not answered, as St. Leo has said. *Caro pati metuens exaudita non fuit* (Sermon 16, 'De Pass. Dmn.,' n. 7). Our Saviour overcame His Fear in the Garden of Olives, and conformed His human will to the will of His Father. As a result of this resignation to His Father's will He abandoned Himself into the hands of His enemies, who scourged Him, crowned Him with thorns, condemned Him to death, and nailed Him to the Cross. Now from the Hill of Sacrifice He cries to His Eternal Father: '*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*' 'It is,' says St. Leo (Sermon 17, 'De Pass. Dmn.,' n. 2) 'that all men should know that He may not escape *any* suffering in His Passion and Death. No one—not even His Father—may defend Him or assist Him, but He must be absolutely abandoned, in the hands of His enemies, and thus be, by His sufferings and death, the Redeemer of Men, and this by the infinite mercy He has for us.' Alone and abandoned He will die for man. In saying to His Father, '*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*' He would say: 'My Father, I am in Thee and Thou art in Me, substantially and indivisibly, but behold Me here abandoned to My enemies. Why hast Thou also forsaken Me, O Father, unless it be in order that I, all alone, should fulfil the conditions necessary for the salvation of men? It was necessary for Me to submit to this death, it was likewise expe-

dient that Thou shouldst not answer My prayer when I prayed that this chalice might pass from Me ; and now it is but fitting that I should be abandoned into the hands of My enemies, for I alone am capable of reconciling sinful man with Thee. I alone am the Redeemer of Men.'

But *this word*, '*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*' also contains an act of the most perfect love which the Heart of the Man-God could feel. Jesus sees the supreme hour approaching—the hour when His sufferings will cease. His agony is at its height, and He feels the overpowering weakness that accompanies death. He feels at this moment that He loves man—for whom He is dying—more than ever (if we may so speak of God, who knows no variation). No one sees the love that consumes His Sacred Heart ; His Eternal Father alone knows it. In order that we also may recognise it, He cries out in piteous accents : '*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*' as though He would say : 'My Father, leave Me yet a little longer in the hands of My enemies, to whom Thou hast delivered Me. I am in their power only so long as My Passion lasts, and I behold My Passion about to end. If it were necessary for love of My children that My Passion should begin over again, I am ready, O My Father. Is it not for *their* sake Thou hast forsaken Me ? *Why* hast Thou forsaken Me ? *Why* hast Thou delivered Me to My executioners, if not that My

children be delivered from Thy justice? Spare *them*, then, I beseech Thee. If Thou requirest that My sufferings be prolonged or increased, I am willing, O My Father, to suffer, were it possible, even more than I am now suffering for love of man, for why else hast Thou forsaken Me?' It well became the Heart of a Man-God to express itself in such sublime language—language which reveals to us the depths of its burning love, and the ardent desire Our Saviour had for our salvation.

In order to show forth this desire yet more clearly, Jesus utters His fifth word—word so short yet so sublime, so brief yet so eloquent, so worthy of the Man-God. *Sitio* ('*I thirst*' (St. John xix. 28). It is the pouring out of His Heart to His Heavenly Father. He tells Him plaintively, 'I thirst.' But what is this thirst which tortures the Dying Saviour? Surely it is the burning thirst of His Heart—the thirst of love, the thirst for love. He thirsts for new sufferings, if such be His Father's will. He is ready to accept and endure any pain possible in order that He may be in truth 'the Man of Sorrows.' This prayer is a different prayer from the one He made in the Garden of Olives—*Transeat a Me calix iste* ('Let this chalice pass from Me'). Here, on the cross, when He has drained the chalice almost to its dregs, He thirsts for more—*Sitio*. In the Garden, as His Passion approached, He almost seemed to shrink—*Tran-*

seat. Here, in the midst of His agony, His love rises triumphant over all, and He cries, *Sitio* ('I thirst'). There He feared, here He only loves; there He trembled, here He is full of courage; there He was struggling and downcast, here He is as a hero seeking fresh conflicts, in order to give fresh proofs of His love—*Sitio, sitio!*

But this sublime word uttered by Our agonizing Lord has another signification. It is the expression of the physical thirst of Jesus, caused by His sufferings and His loss of blood, and in this sense it is the accomplishment of another prophecy concerning the promised Messias. The prophet-king foretold this thirst in these words: 'They gave Me gall for My food, *and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink*' (Ps. lxviii. 22). The first part of this prophecy was accomplished in Jesus Christ when the executioners presented Him with the wine and gall before nailing Him to the cross. Now the second part is about to be fulfilled.

'In My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.' In order that this may come to pass Jesus expresses His thirst—*Sitio.* It is not because He expects His thirst to be satiated that He says this, for He well knows that His cruel and heartless enemies will not give Him one drop of water to refresh Him. The Evangelist tells us He says this word because now He sees that all the other prophecies concerning Him have been fulfilled—

Sciens Jesus quia omnia consummata sunt, ut consummaretur Scriptura, dixit: Sitio (St. John xix. 28).

On hearing this word, 'I thirst,' one of the soldiers takes a sponge and, dipping it in vinegar, presses it to the Lips of the Dying God. Behold, then, Jesus plunged in His Death-agony. He sees all, He knows all. He has accomplished all, and He has used His enemies as His instruments in carrying out His eternal designs. He has looked back over all the Scripture; all its prophecies pass before Him. He sees He has fulfilled them all; this one alone remains—*Sitio* ('I thirst').

At this word the old prophecy, the last remaining prediction concerning His sufferings, is fulfilled, and His enemies hasten to complete its accomplishment. How can we help seeing that this crucified Man is more than an ordinary man? We must own that He is Divine—yea, even the Man-God, the promised Messias.

After the accomplishment of this prophecy Jesus again raises His Voice, and says: *Consummatum est*—'It is consummated' (St. John xix. 30). Let us pause for a few moments, and consider this word Our Saviour uttered at the near approach of His Death.

In that ineffable prayer which Jesus made to His Father after the Last Supper He said: 'I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do' (St. John xvii. 4). If Our Saviour had finished His work *then*, why does He repeat this

now, on the cross, saying, '*It is consummated*'? And if His work is only consummated *now*, a few moments before His Death, how could He have said at His Last Supper that it was finished *then*?

In order to answer these questions we must remember that in undertaking our ransom by an entirely free act of His will, Jesus Christ was charged with *two* works by His Heavenly Father, both with a special end. The *one* was to teach us the way to Heaven, the *other* was to deliver us from the slavery of the devil, into which we had fallen by sin. Jesus Christ was to be our *Master* and our *Redeemer*, because sin had made man both ignorant and criminal.

He taught us the way to Heaven during all His earthly life by His example and by His doctrine. In this way He proved Himself to be a *Master*, and He wished us to be His disciples by practising His doctrine and by imitating His example. This great work of 'Master' ended at the Last Supper. Thus it was that after the supper, being surrounded by His eleven Apostles, He turned to His Eternal Father and said to Him: 'Father, I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do' (St. John xvii. 4). '. . . I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou hast given Me' (*ibid.*, verse 6). But besides this work which was confided to Him by His Eternal Father, Jesus Christ had another and more painful task to

accomplish. It was to drink the bitter chalice of His Passion, to reconcile sinners with His Father, and to win back Heaven for them, which they had forfeited by sin. This was the work of the *Redeemer*. This work was completed in one day. Its completion began in the evening in the Garden of Olives, and it ended the following afternoon on the Hill of Calvary. When the work was almost accomplished, the immolated Victim cried out to His Father: *Consummatum est*—'It is finished. It is consummated. The chalice of bitterness which My Father gave Me I have drained to the very dregs. I have no more blood to shed for man. I have given it to the last drop. I have no more strength in My Body. I have completely paid the enormous debt that man contracted with Divine Justice. Now I have only to die, and My life I offer to My Father, that this sacrifice of propitiation may appease His just anger and reconcile Him with man, for whose salvation I have lived and now am dying. *Consummatum est!* The prophecies are accomplished, Divine Justice is satisfied, man is saved!'

This is the meaning of this sixth word of Our Dying Saviour, and this word, joined to all that Jesus did, all that He said, all that He taught, all that He suffered, all that the prophets foretold concerning the Messias, clearly points to the truth that He is God.

But this word, *Consummatum est*, to whom

does Our Saviour address it? He addresses it to His Heavenly Father, and we have explained in what sense He thus spoke it. But He addresses it also to the demons and to men.

During Our Saviour's agony on the Cross the demons were on Calvary tempting the Jews and the Gentiles, and instigating them to cause Jesus all possible sufferings and humiliations. They were still in doubt as to His Divinity. They felt an invincible power ruling them, and they did not know whence it was. They were boiling over with rage, and yet uncertain as to what would be the issue of this terrible tragedy. Amazed at the sight of the prodigies which happened during Our Saviour's agony, they trembled at each word He uttered from His Cross. Each of these words discovered a mystery which agitated and overwhelmed them. But when Jesus said, *Consummatum est*, then the demons knew that they were defeated, and that the Crucified Man was victorious. It is a cry of victory, and at the cry the blindness falls from their eyes, and they see that they have caused the death of the Son of God, and thus destroyed their own power over man. '*It is consummated.* My sacrifice is offered, and you see that I am the Redeemer of the world, that I have rescued again the prey that you had seized, that I have destroyed the empire of sin that you had built up, that I have weakened your power and punished your malice. *Consummatum est.* Go

down to your infernal abyss. Go ; I reign, and I alone, from the height of My Cross. I alone will reign in all hearts ; I alone must rule all nations, for I alone reign in Heaven. It is, indeed, I whom you fear in your state of damnation, and you must bow the knee to Me for all eternity. *Consummatum est.*'

By this word, joined to His Death, which followed it shortly, Our Divine Saviour destroyed the empire of him who was the principle of death —the devil. As St. Paul says (Heb. ii. 14) : 'Through death He might destroy him who had the empire of death—that is to say, the devil.' Jesus Christ did not wish to conquer satan by the brilliance of His Majesty, but by the weakness of His Humanity, and thus does His Divine Wisdom shine forth. Thus, the devil, who had conquered man, who was man only, was in his turn conquered by a Man who was also God. Jesus thus fought, apparently, with equal strength as Adam with the demon, in order that His victory, which was to wipe out Adam's defeat, might be the more glorious.

But this word, *Consummatum est*, is spoken also to *man*. Our Saviour speaks to men of all ages to prevent them from falling into the errors which He knew Satan was preparing for them. Listen well to this word, *you*, above all, who would pass for wise, you who scoff at religion, you who are blinded by your own poor reason. From the height of His Cross Jesus Christ speaks

to *you*, and the words of the Man-God will remain for ever.

Consummatum est. Therefore reason has nothing to seek out in the Divine mysteries; she has only to *submit*.

Consummatum est. Therefore philosophy has nothing to discover either for the worship of God, for the salvation of men, or for the perfection of society.

Consummatum est. All is finished by the Man-God.

Consummatum est. This is not the time to reason, but to believe. It is not the time to question, but to act. The doctrine is here, the law is here, religion is here, in Jesus Christ crucified, the Man-God, Saviour of the world.

Consummatum est. The true Church is founded—it is the Church of Calvary; the true doctrine is taught—it is the doctrine of Jesus Christ; the law is promulgated—it is the law of the Gospel. All other religions, all other doctrines, all other laws, are only shadows and dreams, for all has been established by Jesus Christ. Come not, then, O worldly men, and speak to us of your new systems, of your pretended reforms and progress. Any system that contradicts the law of Our Saviour is but a myth, which must eventually ruin you. True progress and real reform are only to be found in sincere application of, and in practical faith in, the laws and religion of Jesus Christ. Outside these

there is naught but ignorance—ignorance of God and ignorance of duty. Ignorance is not progress. Outside these you will find only depravity of man, degradation of woman, the reign of the passions and ruin of society. Decay is not progress.

Jesus Christ said, '*All is consummated*,' so we must believe and act. Nothing else is left for us to do. The true religion of the Man-God must be the religion of all men, of all times, of all places, even as God Himself is supreme Lord of all.

Act of Reparation.

Engrave, I beseech Thee, O Lord, these truths on the hearts of all men, but especially on the children of Thy holy Church. Show them that Thy holy religion alone can make them happy in this world and the next, that Thy doctrine alone can enlighten their intelligence and teach their hearts to love the good, the beautiful, and the true. Make them realize that outside Thy Church they will find only error, lying, corruption, and ruin. All is consummated by Thee, O Divine Saviour. We have now naught to do but follow Thee, to imitate Thy example and practise Thy doctrine. Engrave these truths, O my Divine Saviour, on all hearts, for we all have need of them, and woe to us if we forget them. But engrave them especially on the ungrateful hearts

of those men who make war against Thy Divinity. Ah, Lord! how ungrateful are these men, who wilfully shut their eyes that they may not see the benefits they have derived from Thy liberality! Will it always be thus, O Divine Master? O grant this may not be! They need a special light from Thee. Give it to them, I beseech Thee!

O Virgin Mary, Mother of Our Saviour, plead with me for these unfortunate sinners, who are so blinded with their sins. Do thou repair, by thy own virtues, all the injury they do to God and all they will yet do. Vouchsafe to appease the just anger of the Most High, arrest the thunder bolts that Divine Justice is ready to hurl on these blasphemous men, and instead of the punishments they deserve, obtain for them the graces of true repentance and a sincere love of God and thee. Amen.

CHAPTER XV

LAST WORD OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS—HIS DEATH—PROOFS OF HIS DIVINITY

During all His public life the synagogue had done all in their power to make the people hate Our Divine Saviour, and they had incessantly spread the blackest calumnies against Him. The Gospel tells us this. Jesus, on the other hand, went about doing good to all. He forgave sinners, and He prayed His Father to pardon them. At times He spoke to arrest the malice of demons, at other times He opened His Mouth to breathe forth words of eternal life; and again, St. Peter tells us (1 St. Pet. ii. 23) in the midst of His ignominies and sufferings He is silent. All His life He acted thus, and on Calvary, where insults and infamies rush upon Him like a storm that bursts over a tree rich with leaves and fruit, He still maintains His gentle and patient expression. On Calvary He is silent for the most part, but it is a silence truly divine. Before expiring He speaks once more. Let us now consider this last word of Our Dying Saviour, and watch Him as He dies for the love of man.

Our Lord has spoken already six times from the summit of His Cross, and when He cried to His Father, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' the Evangelist tells us it was with a loud voice (St. Matt. xxvii. 46). Now Jesus is at His last breath. His sufferings have completely exhausted Him; His strength has deserted Him. However, He desires to speak yet once more. But can He speak so as to be heard by all around? How can He do this? He is so weak, scarcely could He whisper in the ear of a kind friend, were there one near to wipe the death-sweat from His Brow. How can He be heard over the mountain heights? His Breath comes in faint gasps; His Blood has all left His Veins; His Heart has almost ceased to beat, and yet He desires to speak once more. And opening His parched, dying Lips, Jesus *does* speak once more. The Evangelist again tells us it is 'with a loud voice' that He cries to His Father: *Jesus autem iterum clamans voce magna* (St. Matt. xxvii. 50). No man, being in the state in which Our Saviour was, could have done this. Jesus alone could do it, because He was the Man-God. He pronounced His last word in a loud, clear voice, as He had done at the tomb of Lazarus, when He cried, 'Lazarus, come forth!' He gave His Voice a strength it could not possess without His Divinity—*iterum clamans voce magna.*

He came into the world 'while all things were

in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course' (Wisd. xviii. 14), and as He was about to leave the world, He uttered a loud cry. It is the signal of the dying Man-God. 'It is not thus *we* die,' says St. Jerome; '*we* die with stifled voice, which grows weaker as death approaches nearer, and when death comes the voice has already ceased. Thus do the sinful sons of the old Adam die. But the new Adam, who came down from Heaven, dies *with a loud voice*' ('In Marc.').

Jesus dies, giving forth a loud cry, which announces full life and vigour, at the moment when life and vigour are leaving Him. Thus He would show us that, although He dies *for* men, He does not die *like* men. He does not die from necessity as we do; He dies from choice. 'Death,' says St. Jerome, 'would not dare to approach Jesus Christ if He had not called it to Him with a loud cry and in a tone of authority, which showed to all that He was Master over Death.' 'Man,' says St. Augustine, 'cannot always *sleep* when he desires; but Jesus *dies* when He wills' (Tract 114, 'In Joan.'). He calls Death to Him, and He calls it in a firm, clear voice. Thus does He confound the reproaches of weakness and impotency addressed to Him by the Jews when they defy Him to come down from the Cross, and thus also He changes His death into a willing sacrifice to His Eternal Father.

But what is this word that Our Dying Re-

deemer utters in so clear and strong a voice? '*Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit*' (St. Luke xxiii. 46). He addresses His Father, and calls Him by His tender name of 'Father,' in order to convince us more and more that He is the Only-Begotten Son of God; 'and when He adds, "into Thy hands I commend My Spirit," ' says Venerable Bede ('In Luc.'), 'He speaks as a Son who has complete confidence in His Father, and who knows that, in a short time, He will rise again, glorious and immortal, by the power which He possesses in common with His Father.'

After saying this word He bows His Head—*et inclinato capite* (St. John xix. 30). It is not that death weakens Him; He willingly bows His Head before dying, 'and by that,' says St. John Chrysostom, 'He would indicate that He is the Man *par excellence*—the Model Man-God, and Master of all things. He bows His Head to show that it is willingly and with joy He accepts death from the Hand of His Father, whom He obeys even to the end (*factus obediens usque ad mortem*). He bows His Head, and, as it were, gives the signal for death to approach, having called it to Him with His last cry.'

And now nothing remains for Jesus to do but die—*Et inclinato capite, tradidit spiritum* (St. John xix. 30). As Jesus bows His Head, the angels who surround His deathbed veil their faces and weep, while the infernal spirits are once more cast into their dark abyss, their tortures re-

doubled for the part they have taken in the crucifixion of the Son of God.

As His Head falls gently forward a great paleness spreads over the Face of Our Saviour. His Eyes are closed. He draws His last breath, and dies—*tradidit spiritum.*

He dies by His own will and power. He gave His Spirit to His Father, as St. Ambrose says: *Tradidit spiritum quia non invitus amisit.* It is not the pain of His torments that has made Him die, for these torments ought to have caused His death long before. Any one of them alone was sufficient to take away the life of an ordinary man. No; Jesus is dead of His own free will. He is dead for love of us. He is dead by giving His Spirit back into His Father's hands—*tradidit spiritum.* Jesus, then, is dead—dead because He loved sinful man so much. He died as only a God could die; but in order to realize this better let us turn to some of the prodigies, to which we have already alluded, which accompanied and succeeded His death. 'All nature groans, and mourns the death of its Creator,' says St. Cyril. 'This agitation of nature,' says St. Leo, 'is but the testimony it owes to its Author.'

When Jesus bowed His Head the darkness which prevailed grew yet more intense; and when He died, 'behold,' says St. Matthew, 'the veil of the Temple was rent in two, from the top even to the bottom, and the earth quaked, and the

rocks were rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints that had slept arose, and coming out of the tombs . . . appeared to many' (xxvii. 51-53).

All these things came to pass at the moment when Jesus expired. They happened suddenly, like a flash of lightning. They were the effects and consequences of His death, and, at the same time, a proof of His Divinity. 'These sudden and extraordinary prodigies,' says St. Leo, 'are the answer that Heaven and earth give to the impiety and blasphemies of the Jews, who have defied their Creator to come down from the cross and prove that He is God.' This answer of all creatures, who are roused, as it were, at the moment of Our Saviour's death, is eloquent, and ought to close the mouths of those impious men who, carried away by their vile passions, dare to say that Jesus Christ is not God.

Speaking one day to the Jews, Our Divine Lord had said: '*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself*' (St. John xii. 32); and St. John adds: 'Now this He said, signifying what death He should die.' Behold Him now 'lifted up' on the Cross. He has suffered a most excruciating agony for three hours. He is dead in the midst of humiliations, of opprobrium, and of incomparable sufferings, and now His words are realized.

'Thou hast drawn all things to Thyself, O Lord,' says St. Leo, 'and hast communicated to

all creatures an intimate knowledge of Thy Majesty. Thou hast drawn all things to Thyself, by darkening the sun and the moon, and by making the earth tremble and groan, thus preventing Thy creatures from giving their service to other gods than Thee. Thou hast drawn all things to Thyself, for in rending the veil of the Temple Thou hast shown that the priests of the old law were not worthy to guard Thy sanctuary. Thy prophecies are accomplished, and the law of Thy Gospel has been introduced. Thou hast drawn all things to Thyself, whereas formerly Thy worship was confined to Jerusalem; now from the north to the south, from the east to the west, there is one Sacrifice offered, and Thou art adored as God by all nations.'

Yes, He draws all things to Himself from the height of His Cross, where He died for us.

He is dead, but His arms are extended to show us the ardent desire He has for all to come to Him, and woe to those who refuse His loving invitation.

Placed thus between Heaven and earth, from the gibbet of His Cross He measures the universe. In dying He bows His Head towards Rome, to salute her as the centre of His Church, for there He will establish His Vicar, who will represent Him on earth, in spite of the hatred of His enemies or the rage of hell.

He is dead on His Cross, but He has founded His Empire; it is His Church which He has built up amidst His humiliations and sufferings.

With His arms extended He embraces the entire human race, scattered over the face of the earth, and at the same time He casts off the synagogue and chooses a new race, which His Eternal Father has given Him as His inheritance.

By the Crown of Thorns upon His Head and by the Cross on which He rests, as on a throne, by the written Title which proclaims Him King, and by all the wounds which cover His Body, He speaks to the heart of man, and dead though He be He says to the proud and impious unbelievers: 'I am your God. In a few hours I will rise again by My own power, and in spite of all the foolish precautions of My enemies I will commence the work of sanctifying the souls of men, by the application of My merits, whilst I enlighten them by the charms of My grace. I will draw all things to Myself, and all those souls whom My Father has given Me. By the strength of My Arm I will grind to dust all who oppose Me on My victorious march to My kingdom, all who deny the triumph of My Cross. *Exaltatus, omnia traham ad meipsum.*' Truly this is the Man-God!

ACT OF REPARATION.

O my Divine Saviour, there are still others of Thy creatures who need to be drawn to Thee. They are those unfortunate sinners of our day who walk the broad road that leads to perdition, and who turn away from Thee to seek happiness

where it is not to be found. They are those worldly men who attend only to their well-being in this world, and never think of the life to come. They are those sensual men who pass their lives in the indulgence of their passions, like those unclean animals who dare not gaze on the light. They are those proud and haughty men who, full of themselves and forgetful of their miseries, are imitators of Satan, and strive, like him, to desecrate the sanctuary of Thy glory, in the foolish hope of overthrowing Thee and putting in Thy place their base and hideous passions. These unhappy men, O Divine Jesus, are much to be pitied, and this is why I pray Thee to draw them to Thyself by Thy all-powerful grace. Thou alone knowest the secret depths of their sinful hearts, and Thou alone knowest how to draw them to sorrow and to love. Thou alone hast the power to raise the dead to life—Thou who didst even raise Thine own Body from death. Raise them, I beseech Thee, from this awful death in which they now lie. Work this miracle, O Lord, by the merits of Thy sorrowful Passion and Thy most Precious Blood. Grant my prayer for the love Thou bearest these poor souls whom Thou didst redeem at the cost of Thy own life.

Draw these souls to Thyself by the love Thou bearest Mary Thy Immaculate Mother. She suffered so much on Calvary with Thee for the salvation of men. Oh, listen to the prayers of her whom the Church has styled the 'Co-redemptress' of Humanity. Amen.

CHAPTER XVI

JESUS' SIDE IS PIERCED WITH A LANCE—HIS BURIAL—PROOFS OF HIS DIVINITY

When God had created Adam, He put him in the earthly Paradise to cultivate it and take care of it. After a time God gave him a helpmate in the person of Eve, who was ordained to be his spouse and companion. God sent Adam a mysterious sleep, and while Adam slept God took one of his ribs, and out of it He formed the woman Eve. This is the foreshadowing of the sublime Mystery wrought on Calvary—the mystery we are now about to consider. It will give us, like all the other scenes of the Passion, striking proofs of Our Saviour's Divinity.

The first Adam was only a figure of the second Adam, as St. Paul says: *Adam, qui est forma futuri* (Rom. v. 14). The mysterious sleep of the first Adam represented the momentary death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, and the first woman, Eve, formed from the side of Adam, represented the Holy Church, which sprang from the open Side of our Saviour.

When Jesus had delivered His Soul into the

Hands of His Eternal Father, a soldier opened His Side with a lance, and from His open Side came forth His Spouse, the Church. Then all His enemies disappear, and there remain on the mountain only a few faithful ones, who watch the Body of Jesus, and who will give It an honourable burial.

Let us glance at the events that took place on Calvary after the death of Our Divine Lord, the prophecies that were then accomplished, and the final proofs to be gathered of His Divinity.

Among the miracles that followed the death of Our Saviour there is one especially that will strike an attentive reader, and yet it is one that was little noticed at the time. It was the conversion of the centurion and his soldiers.

We have already spoken of the conversion of the centurion. Let us now study the conversion of his men. These soldiers are the same who seized and bound Jesus so roughly, who dragged Him through the streets of Jerusalem, who scourged Him, crowned Him with thorns, spat in His Face, and finally nailed Him to the Cross. We have been witnesses of this. During all His Passion these men have been monsters of cruelty. Now behold Jesus agonizing on Calvary. He utters a loud cry and dies, and at His death all nature seems to rise in revolt against His guilty executioners. The sun is eclipsed, the earth trembles, rocks are rent, the tombs open, and the bodies of the just come

forth. The wonderful prodigies awaken the souls of these men, steeped in crime, and touch to the quick their brutal, bloodthirsty hearts. See them now, suddenly become for the most part true confessors of the innocence and Divinity of Jesus Christ. It is not fear that awakens them from their terrible lethargy, but it is the grandeur and the multiplicity of the miracles which overwhelm them. One says to another : 'Truly this Man was just ; He was the Son of God,' and they wonder within themselves. Thus the executioners of Jesus become His disciples, the first children of His Church, and the least suspected testifiers of His Divinity. Three hours before they little expected such a sudden and marvellous change. One would not have dared hope it. However, the change has come ; it is real and visible, and to these converted soldiers are now joined a number of the Jewish crowd who were spectators of the death of Jesus. 'And all the multitude of them that were come together to that sight, and saw the things that were done, returned striking their breasts' (St. Luke xxiii. 48). Could the Divinity of Jesus be proved more conclusively ? But we have yet another scene to contemplate.

There was a custom among the Jews after criminals had remained on their crosses some hours to break their legs, and thus to put an end to their struggles. This was done by means of heavy hammers, with which several hard blows

were struck. It was such excruciating agony for the poor sufferers that they generally expired before it was completed. The Sabbath would commence at sunset of the day on which Jesus died. Not wishing the bodies of the crucified to remain on their crosses on so solemn a day, the Jewish magistrates hurried off to Pilate to demand permission to break their legs, and thus kill them. When they were dead it was the custom to throw the bodies of the criminals into a public pit. 'that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath Day' (St. John xix. 31). This was the language they used to Pilate, but in reality their great desire was to brand Jesus a malefactor to the end—to confound Him with the thieves, both in the breaking of the legs and in the immediate and public burial of His Body. But it is for God, when He wills, to overthrow the plans of man—*Non est concilium contra Dominum*. The Most High had, indeed, permitted, in fulfilment of a prophecy, that His Divine Son should be attached to the Cross between two thieves, but He would not permit Him to die and be buried like them. There were other prophecies which were to be accomplished in the Person of Our Saviour, and God upset all the projects of the Jews in order that they might be fulfilled.

Jesus died when He willed because He was God, and He is already dead, having died *as* He willed because He is truly the Son of God.

Pilate gives the Jews the permission they crave. They return to Calvary, but they have to bend their wills to the will of God. Jesus knew their design before they had put it into execution. While they had gone to Pilate the hour for the completion of His Sacrifice arrived, and with a loud cry He died. When, therefore, they returned to Calvary to execute their plan of breaking His Legs, they found that Jesus was already dead; the two thieves were still alive. They broke the legs of these two, but seeing that Jesus was dead, they realized the inutility of offering Him this last insult. One soldier, more bold than the rest, pierced the Side of Our Saviour with his lance. It penetrated His Heart, and Blood and Water gushed forth. *Venerunt ergo milites: et primi quidem fregerunt crura, et alterius, qui crucifixus est cum eo. Ad Jesum autem quum venissent, ut viderunt eum jam mortuum, non fregerunt ejus crura. Sed unus militum lancea latus ejus aperuit: et continuo exivit sanguis, et aqua* (St. John xix. 32-34). Who dispensed the Jews from breaking Our Saviour's legs when they broke the legs of the two who were crucified with Him? Who directed them to adopt, in the case of Jesus, a new plan, never executed before, and to perform an act for which they had no authorization? It was the Divinity of Jesus, which remained as guardian over His Body. The Jews framed their designs, but God baffled them and made use of the Jews themselves to execute His Divine will.

God had said of the Paschal Lamb some time before, 'Neither shall you break a bone thereof' (Exod. xii. 46). The Paschal Lamb was the figure of Jesus Christ—the Lamb of God, who was to take away the sins of the world, and who was immolated without opening His Mouth. The *figure* was spared from having any bone broken only in view of the *Reality*, and the order of God applied to the *Reality* more than to the *figure*. When, therefore, the Jews returned to Calvary to break the Legs of Our Saviour, His Divinity prevented them, and said: 'You shall go no further: you shall not break a bone of this wounded Body' (*Os non comminuetis ex eo*). 'You shall look upon Me, whom you have pierced'—*Videbunt in quam transfixerunt* (Zach. xii. 10).

These events happen thus on Calvary because Jesus Christ, after His death, desired to accomplish in Himself these prophecies which would prove more clearly that He was the Lamb of God, sacrificed for the salvation of men. St. John says: 'For these things were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. You shall not break a bone of Him;' and again another Scripture saith: 'They shall look on Him whom they have pierced' (xix. 36, 37). The Body of Our Saviour is torn and mangled, but His Bones have been spared. Instead of His Legs being broken His Side is opened, and Blood and Water flow out.

Here is a new mystery—one which, like the preceding one, testifies to the Divinity of Our

Lord. How do the Blood and Water testify to the Divinity of Jesus? Open the Scriptures, and it will be clearly seen how this also is a proof of His Divinity. St. John, the beloved disciple, stood by the Cross and saw this Blood and Water flow from the side of his Master. He will furnish us with the proof we are seeking.

St. John lays down this principle that 'Jesus Christ is Truth'—*Christus est Veritas* (1 St. John v. 6). He is the same Truth who said with His own Lips: 'I am the Way, the *Truth*, and the Life. I am the Essential Truth. I am *The Truth*. All that I say is true. I do not say, I cannot say, aught that is not true. I am true in My very nature, and consequently I am not only true man, I am also true God.' This proposition sounds bold; yes, but nevertheless we must accept it, for it comes from the Mouth of Truth Itself—*Christus est Veritas*.

Having laid down this principle, St. John tells us (1 St. John v. 7, 8) 'there are three who give testimony in Heaven—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one. And there are three that give testimony on earth—the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three are one.'

We must, then, believe that Jesus Christ, who is Truth, is truly the Son of God, because there are three unquestionable testimonies in Heaven—the Father who sent Him, the Word who became Incarnate, and the Holy Ghost, who is one with the Father and the Son.

But this is not all. St. John also says: 'There are three that give testimony on earth—the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three are one.' These three things form one testimony to the Divinity of the Man-God. There are, then, according to St. John, two Trinities that give testimony to Jesus Christ—one Trinity in Heaven and one Trinity on earth. The Trinity in Heaven is a 'Trinity of Persons'—the Person of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The Trinity on earth is a 'Trinity of Signs'—the sign of Spirit, of Water, and of Blood. But what does he mean by this Spirit and Water and Blood? Cornelius à Lapide tells us: 'The Spirit that bears testimony to the Divinity of Jesus Christ is the Spirit that Jesus Christ commended to His Father when dying. The Water and the Blood, which also testify to His Divinity, are the Water and the Blood which miraculously gushed forth from His open Heart after His death, when His Side was pierced with the lance' (Corn. à Lap., apud P. Ventura tresor nasc. homel. 33).

There are, then, the two Trinities, which, according to St. John, bear testimony to the Divinity of Christ—the one celestial, the other terrestrial. The Trinity on earth represents the Trinity in Heaven, the Water typifying the Father, the Blood representing the Son, the Spirit signifying the Holy Ghost.

To the voice of the three Divine Persons who

bear testimony to Our Divine Saviour in Heaven are joined the voices of the three circumstances that accompany the death of Jesus Christ, which bear testimony to Him on earth. Thus, Heaven and earth, Divine Persons, and human things, the mysteries of the Eternal Life of Jesus and those of His death, supernatural events and sensible circumstances—prodigies of grace and wonders of nature—all unite to give one grand crowning testimony of the Divinity of Jesus Christ Our Lord. They tell us that this 'Man of Sorrows,' who died on the Cross in so heroic and supernatural a manner, and who, after His death, allowed His Side to be pierced with a lance, whence Blood and Water miraculously flowed, was in reality the true Son of God—the Man-God.

St. John tells us that Our Saviour worked many other wonders that are not written, 'but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God' (St. John xx. 31). It was the exterior and visible Humanity of Jesus that suffered these ignominies and outrages before and after His death, but it was the Divinity within Him that disposed all, and allowed only those things to happen which were the fulfilment of the prophecies spoken concerning the Son of Man.

There are some events in human life—even in the order of nature—that man cannot explain. There are also some works that God shows us

in a finished state, without letting us know the mysterious inner process that has accomplished them. Thus these works appear to the human mind to be incomprehensible as the results of the causes that have apparently produced them. In order to explain them and account for them, we must acknowledge an intervention of Providence, which alone can bring to pass such wonders of nature and of grace. If we do not admit this intervention of Providence, not only shall we remain in the darkness of ignorance, but this very ignorance will lead us into the most grievous errors.

Those who witnessed the shameful treatment endured by Our Saviour during His Passion, and the futile efforts of His enemies to brand Him as a criminal, would not have dared to hope that, after His death, He would receive an honourable burial. They would have expected, on the contrary, that His Sacred Body would have been contemptuously cast into the public pit, where the corpses of all the criminals were thrown. However, it was not thus that Our Saviour was to be buried. He was to be buried with the greatest honour and reverence. This proves that a special Providence directed all that concerned Jesus Christ in His Passion. The Providence of God had a special end in view which was hidden from the malice of man, but which was worthy of Divine Love and Wisdom.

Let us see how it is that Jesus Christ receives

an honourable burial, contrary to all anticipation, after the shame and humiliation of His Passion and Death.

Having opened the Side of Our Lord with a lance, the Jews ought to have used the permission accorded them by Pilate to take His Sacred Body off the Cross and have thrown it into the public pit with the bodies of the thieves, to be covered with rubbish, and the place of His burial forgotten. However, the Body of Jesus remains intact on the Cross, and not one of His enemies attempts to touch It. It is because His Divinity guards the Body to which It is still united, and that same Divinity has already spoken to the hearts of two senators, just and pious men—Joseph and Nicodemus—who will now perform the last act of charity to their Redeemer.

Joseph of Arimathea goes courageously to Pilate and asks permission to take the Body of Our Saviour from the Cross and bury It himself. Pilate consents, although he well knows that the body of a public criminal belongs to the public justice, and no individual has any right to claim it. Nicodemus accompanies Joseph to Calvary, in order to carry out their purpose of burying the Body of Jesus.

The scene on Calvary is changed. As long as Jesus was suffering on the Cross, as long as He was offering His Sacrifice, only a few chosen friends were there, surrounded by a number of sinners and enemies. But now that the Sacrifice

is over, and the Heart of Jesus has been pierced to let flow the Blood and Water from which His Church shall spring, now all His enemies disappear from Calvary, and there remain only the just souls, first-fruits of the Church—they who will assist His sorrowful Mother in her last sad duty to her Son.

The separation of the just from the sinners at this time is remarkable; but there is a reason for it—because the sacrifice once completed, the sinners have no need now to remain and insult their Victim. When Our Divine Saviour gave Himself into their hands in the Garden of Olives, He said: 'This is your hour.' Now the hour He let them have is past; there is no more they can do against Him, and by the same Divine strength by which He cast them to the ground in the garden, He now sends them away from the mountain on which He offered His Sacrifice for man.

Animated with lively faith in Our Divine Lord, Joseph and Nicodemus go to Calvary. They meet with no opposition from the soldiers or the people, and overcoming all human respect, they set themselves to the work they have in view.

Reverently and tenderly they detach the Sacred Body of Jesus from the Cross. Their faith tells them that this is the Body of their God, and they know that by the very touch of It they will be sanctified. All who now remain on Calvary

sharing their sentiments approach to touch the wounded Body, and reverently kiss the instruments of pain that have been made precious by their contact with the Sacred Flesh and Precious Blood of Jesus. Poor penitent Magdalen once again embraces her Master's Feet, again washes them with her tears, and presses on Them kisses of repentant love. John, the beloved disciple, lays again his head on his Master's Breast. But what can Mary do? Poor broken-hearted Mother! With open arms she receives the crushed and bruised Body of her Divine Son. She gazes on His wounds, and counts each bruise. She sees His wounded Side, His thorn-crowned Head, His pierced Hands and Feet, and with broken-hearted love she repeats again her 'fiat': 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord!'

The centurion and the soldiers waiting by repeat again and again, 'Truly this Man was the Son of God.' The angels who are there in lowly adoration repeat this same act of faith, and even the demons in hell, burning with rage and hatred, are forced to cry out: *Vere Filius Dei erat iste.*

When all had taken a last farewell of the 'Man of Sorrows,' Joseph and Nicodemus take the Body from the Mother's arms. They embalm It and envelop It in a winding-sheet that Joseph has brought with him. This man has on Calvary, not far from the place of the crucifixion, a new sepulchre hewn out of the rock, a new tomb, in

which no body has ever been laid. To this tomb they now carry the Sacred Body of Our Divine Lord, and they roll a stone to the door of the sepulchre—*Et advolvit saxum magnum ad ostium monumenti* (St. Matt. xxvii. 60).

Thus is Jesus buried with honour in a new Sepulchre by two senators, two of the principal members of the Sanhedrim, who had not joined in judging Him worthy of death. There are neither Scribes nor Pharisees at His tomb. All the Jewish malice and Gentile rage has departed. There remain on Calvary, for the burial of Jesus, only the chosen ones, the faithful few, and the converted sinners. How comes it that Jesus has received such an honourable burial after being treated with so much ignominy? The prophet Isaias tells us. He foretold that God had ordained that the Messias—His Only-Begotten Son—should be laid in His tomb with glory. Enlightened with a prophetic light, he said that the Messias would offer Himself, of His own free will, into the hands of His enemies, and 'He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter . . . and He shall not open His Mouth' (liii. 7). 'We have seen Him, and there was no sightliness that we should be desirous of Him. Despised and the most abject of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity, and His look was, as it were, hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows, and we

have thought Him, as it were, a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our iniquities. He was bruised for our sins ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed . . . and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all' (liii. 3-6). 'He was reputed with the wicked, . . . and He hath prayed for His transgressors' (liii. 12). And in another place the prophet says: 'Him the Gentiles shall beseech, and His sepulchre shall be glorious' (Isa. xi. 10).

From these prophecies we see the decrees of the Most High concerning the Messias. According to these decrees the Messias was to offer Himself up to His enemies for the salvation of all. He was to be ill-treated in every possible way, and was to be reputed with the wicked, for whose forgiveness He was to pray. And then, after an ignominious death, all nations were to prostrate themselves at His Feet and offer Him their prayers, and His Sepulchre was to be glorious.

All these things have been fulfilled to the letter in Jesus Christ, and we have just seen how He was laid in His tomb with honour. His burial itself—so honourable and so glorious after so much ignominy and humiliation—is but the accomplishment of a prophecy, and thus it is a final proof that He is the Messias, the Redeemer of the world, Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God, the Man-God.

The prophecy of Isaias, just quoted, will serve as a résumé of our work, in which we have seen how the Divinity of Jesus Christ shines forth in each scene of His Passion. From the Garden of Gethsemani to the Tomb on Mount Calvary, all bear witness to His Divinity. Even were we to pass over all that Jesus did during His life of thirty-three years, the sight of Him during His Passion alone would teach us that He is the Son of God; and if to this we add what came to pass when He rose glorious from the tomb (to which we referred in our preliminary chapter), we are brought face to face with a most unquestionable and unanswerable proof that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God—equal to His Father in all things.

Before such a demonstration of His Divinity, what can we do but believe and adore?

Conclusion and Act of Reparation.

To what can we compare those infidels who would make men believe that Jesus Christ is not God?

On the hottest day of summer I enter one of those asylums which are, unfortunately, so numerous nowadays. There, in the middle of the courtyard, I see a lunatic, standing bare-headed in the tropical mid-day sun. He shuts his eyes, he struggles, yells, gesticulates, and wearies himself. I go up to him, and say: 'My

friend, what is the matter? Why do you yell, and scream, and excite yourself here in the very hottest glare of the blazing sun?' He answers me: 'It is because I want to prove to you that there is no sun up there.' 'You deny, then, the presence of the sun at broad mid-day?' 'Yes,' he says; 'I deny it. What is called the sun is not the sun; it is only a lamp that is hanging up there.' Meanwhile the sun continues his majestic course, when suddenly one ray of heat, stronger than the rest, strikes the head of the unfortunate man in the yard, and he falls dead, killed by the very sun whose existence he had denied. You will tell me he was mad. Certainly; but he was not more mad than those men who deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ, 'the Sun of Justice.' The folly of these latter is even greater, for it is not madness of mind that makes them ridiculous and mistaken, but madness of heart, and this is more deplorable than madness of mind, for this madness of hearts renders men the most abject and degraded beings who can exist upon the earth.

To deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ when all creatures proclaim it, to deny it when we discover it shining amidst the ignominies of His Passion, is a madness beyond expression. Hell alone can serve as an asylum to such unfortunate madmen, and it will be this very 'Sun of Justice'—Jesus Christ, God and Man—who will send them there. He is the Lamb of God, but

He is also the Lion of Juda. After being the meek and gentle lamb, silent and merciful, He will, at the appointed time, roar as a lion. The strongest and most courageous spirits will quake and tremble before Him, and they will be forced —too late—to admit that they were mistaken. Let not Catholics be led astray by these false teachers who rage against the Divinity of Jesus Christ ; let them ever regard these men as 'Antichrists,' as St. John calls them. They are those 'clouds without water' of which St. Jude speaks, carried about here and there by the winds of their bad passions, spreading the breath of error in the hearts of those who hunger for truth. They are like 'raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion,' and casting up impure and infectious wrecks. 'These are they who separate themselves, sensual men, having not the spirit' (Jude i. 19). These are those men who have known the truth and have disowned it, who have had the faith and have lost it, whose hearts were once pure, but are now sullied, who 'promise liberty, whereas they themselves are the slaves of corruption' (2 St. Pet. ii. 19). These are those men of whom the Apostle speaks when he says : 'It had been better for them not to have known the way of justice, than after they have known it to turn back from that holy commandment which was delivered to them' (2 St. Pet. ii. 21).

Fly from these men, and close your ears to

their seditious and blasphemous words, for they will only cause you unhappiness.

Let us again and again reanimate our faith in Jesus Christ and in His Divinity, and in order to repair, as far as we can, the awful injury rendered to Him by these perverted men, let us often repeat with love those beautiful words taught us by Holy Church :

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula. Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine. Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri ; per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de cœlis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine ; et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas. Et ascendit in cœlum, sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos : cujus regni non erit finis.

O Divine Jesus, Our Lord and Our God, prostrate at Thy Feet we say to Thee with loving hearts : ' O God, who for the redemption of the world didst deign to be born, to be circumcised, to be rejected by the Jews, and betrayed by Judas with a kiss ; to be bound with fetters and led like an innocent lamb to the slaughter ; to

be ignominiously brought before Annas, Caiphas, Pilate, and Herod; to be accused by false witnesses; to be scourged, buffeted, and reviled; to be spit upon, crowned with thorns, and struck with a reed; to be blindfolded, stripped of Thy garments; to be nailed to a cross and raised thereon; to be numbered among thieves; to be made to drink of gall and vinegar, and to be pierced with a lance, do Thou, O Lord, by these Thy most holy sufferings which we Thy servants commemorate, and by Thy most holy cross and death, deliver us from the pains of hell, and conduct us, as Thou didst conduct the penitent thief, into Thy Paradise. Who liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen.'

THE END

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WITHDRAWN

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